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L I T E R A T U R E, D O G M A A N D E D U C A T I O N

a study of Matthew Arnold's later criticism and
its educational implications for today

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for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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A B S T R A C T

The main object of the thesis is to explore the concepts 'literature' and 'dogma' in relation to education. It considers the place of literature in the educational curriculum and examines its relationship with religion, moral education and science.

The point of departure for the study is Matthew Arnold's Literature and Dogma (1873) which, in conjunction with related writings, is considered first within the cultural and educational climate of its own age, and then evaluated for its relevance and educational implications for the present day. Matthew Arnold, a distinguished social critic, professor of poetry and Inspector of Education, wrote Literature and Dogma at a time of considerable social and intellectual upheaval; and the pattern of social change brought about by accelerating technology over the past century, with its increasing clash of cultures and diverse dogmatic and ideological systems has given new significance to Arnold's thought. In particular, his ideas on moral, scientific and religious education have implications for the modern curriculum and for the place of literature within it, which the research endeavours to bring into focus and develop.

In a shrinking and increasingly complex world, where there is evidence of an increasing need for education to provide young people with both a sense of security and a flexible capacity to cope with unexampled change, Arnold's own upbringing is shown to be of some educational interest.

The conclusion reached is that, while it is impossible to prove the moral efficacy of literature, there seems to be some justification for believing that imaginative literature, appropriately taught, has an increasingly significant role to play as a means of ordering emotions, conveying values, enhancing our capacity for empathy and communicating insights, as religious certainties and moral dogmas come under challenge from alternative competing dogmas and agencies for change.

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'In a culture such as ours, where there is so much pressure towards uniformity of taste in our mass media of communication... it becomes the more important to nurture confident intuition in the realm of literature and the arts, yet one finds a virtual vacuum on this topic in educational research.'

Jerome Bruner (1963)

'...The wiser people become, whether in science, religion, politics, or art, the less dogmatic they become. Apparently, the better we know the territory of human experience, the more aware we are of the limitations of the verbal maps we can make of it...'

S I Hayakawa (1966)

PREFACE

Matthew Arnold's Literature and Dogma (1873) is the 'raison d'être' and point of departure for this study: a century old, it still has a modern ring, and touches significantly on matters of vital cultural and educational importance today.

One of the outstanding social critics and educationists of the nineteenth century, Matthew Arnold's reputation rests principally perhaps on Culture and Anarchy which is widely accepted as an unusually perceptive analysis of the social and political milieu of mid-Victorian England. As educationist his reports on continental education, his advocacy of state education and opposition to the application of the principle of 'payment by results', together with his continuous work for thirty-five years as Inspector of Schools (finally Chief Inspector of Schools) assure him of a noteworthy place in the history of English education. He was also an eminent poet, holding the Chair of Poetry at Oxford from 1857 to 1866, and a major literary critic of his time.

With these credentials, it is perhaps surprising that what he himself regarded as the 'most important' of all his prose works and 'most capable of being useful' - Literature and Dogma - should until recently have been largely disregarded by his biographers and critics once the initial furor caused by its publication had died down. The climate of opinion in 1873 seemed to be ripe for such a publication for it was popularly received, although from the orthodox (both among scientists and theologians) it received what the author described as 'more than its fair share of misrepresentation'. With prophetic insight, however, Arnold recognized that the issues it dealt with would, after a lapse of time, come urgently to the fore again, and then would be the time for renewed consideration of his thesis. Now that a century has passed since the publication of Literature and Dogma, the present cultural climate and the educational problems related to it seem remarkably appropriate to warrant a new analysis and reassessment of Arnold's book and its implications.

Educationists faced with constructing a curriculum for a fast-changing world, with ethical values and doctrinal assertions in the melting pot, and scientific and technological advance escalating at a bewildering rate, can benefit from Arnold's views on the dangers of dogma, and on the nature and potentialities of literature. Arnold's approach also raises important issues as to man's best means of accommodating himself to the Zeitgeist ('Time-Spirit') and our changing Weltanschauung ('World-view').

Topics of educational importance upon which Literature and Dogma has bearing include the nature of, and relationship between literature, science and religion; the place and value of literary studies; problems of overspecialization and the integration or compatibility of disciplines; problems of religious and moral education in a pluralistic society; problems of freedom and authority in educational organization and content. In short, a variety of closely interrelated qualitative questions not easily subjected to experimental study, but nonetheless of crucial importance to education, and matters of increasing concern to society. In such a complex field this study will not seek to be inclusive (which would clearly be impossible), or conclusive (which would be foolhardy), but suggestive; and it is hoped that the subject-matter will itself justify the validity of a primarily suggestive approach.

At this time perhaps more than ever before imaginative insight needs to be brought to bear on practical issues facing society, and in this sphere Arnold is pre-eminent. William Robbins (1959) is among the increasing number of critics who recognize this:

...in an age which can solve the problem of survival only by more than mere physical co-operation, by a pooling of moral and spiritual resources, the sanity and catholicity of attitudes like (Arnold's) are desperately needed. The practical idealism of his values can give meaning and purpose to education, which often has neither, and it can be a means of reconciling the persisting differences of Christian, scientist, and humanist.

In the following pages this conception and its implications will be further explored; from a critical study of Literature and Dogma in conjunction with

Arnold's other critical and educational writings, it is hoped to extract something of his epistemology and ethical outlook.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

With debts extending so far I cannot be comprehensive, so I shall try to be brief.

For hospitality to a 'stray' thesis I must thank the Curriculum Studies Department of the University of London Institute of Education. An eclectic, non-empirical, non-statistical study is something of a cuckoo in the nest: I am grateful that it was allowed to hatch out where it was. In particular I wish to thank a succession of long-suffering tutors - Dr (now Professor) Denis Lawton, Mrs Maggie Ing and Dr Peter Gordon - for their sensitive advice and patience.

For initial encouragement to undertake the research I must thank my former tutor, the late Professor Doris Lee.

For informal, critically stimulating, discussions along the way I must thank innumerable academic colleagues and students, and particularly Professor William Wall, Dr Ian Michael and Dr James Henderson at the University of London Institute of Education.

For a term's Teacher Fellowship (in 1975) at the School of Oriental and African Studies to study the educational implications of cultural diversity I must thank the Inner London Education Authority, and my former Principal, Miss Mary Puddephat; and for invaluable insights gained from discussions during the term I wish to thank Mr Ted O'Connor, Professor P M Holt, Professor Kenneth Ballhatchet and Professor Kenneth Strong. At S.O.A.S. I bit off as much as I could chew in a term, and more than I could digest and assimilate into one thesis. (I hope to do justice to Fukuzawa's, Al-Aghani's and other Eastern liberal thinkers' response to the same Zeitgeist that touched Matthew Arnold, at some future date.)

For the generous long-term loan of his invaluable typescript on 'Arnold and Religion' I must thank Professor Basil Willey, whose sensitive appreciation of Matthew Arnold has been a constant source of inspiration.

For generous hospitality, encouragement and stimulating discussion both sides of the Atlantic, I must thank Professor Robert H Super, to whose definitive eleven-volume edition of Arnold's prose all Arnoldian scholars are indebted.

For efficiency, help and patience I am indebted to the staffs of a number of libraries, including in particular the British Museum, Senate House, the London Institute of Education, Rachel McMillan College of Education, Goldsmiths' College, the I.L.E.A., the School of Oriental and African Studies, and (in America) the University of Chicago, Ann Arbor University and Columbia University, New York.

For a year's study leave to complete this thesis I wish to thank the University of London Goldsmiths' College.

For living patiently with this second thesis from its inception, through its long growing pains to its hoary completion I must thank my Wife and family.

Finally, this thesis - an analysis of two concepts - is a synthesis of the thoughts and ideas of many writers. I am conscious of my indebtedness to them all, and hope that I have done justice to some of them in what follows.

ABBREVIATIONS

All references refer by author and date of publication to the final Bibliography, with two exceptions:

For convenience, references to R H Super's Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold are indicated simply by the editor's name and the volume number, as follows:

Super I

II

III

IV, etc. (to volume XI)

(The complete title of each of these volumes is included in the final bibliography under SUPER, R H.)

Notebooks refers to The Note-books of Matthew Arnold, edited by Howard Foster Lowry, Karl Young and Waldo Hilary Dunn (see bibliography).

P A R T O N E

VALUE-ACQUISITION IN EDUCATION: BACKGROUND
TO THE CURRENT SCENE

This thesis examines the concepts of 'literature' and 'dogma' in relation to society in general and to the school curriculum in particular, and explores how far literature, and a 'literary' approach to studies, can provide an antidote to the dangers inherent in dogmatism in a fast-shrinking world, where the incidence of cultural plurality must increasingly bring time-honoured value systems into conflict, and challenge their traditional authority and sanctions.

It is a basic premise of this thesis (although initially it must be expressed in a somewhat oversimplified form) that literature seeks to nourish the individual for his own sake; dogma (and its successor, ideology) seeks to nurture the individual for the sake of society. Since education is concerned to prepare the individual for his entry into the wider society it is important for educators concerned with the curriculum to pay some attention to these two concepts. It is primarily in the realm of values rather than cognitive development that literature and dogma hold sway, and it is this aspect of education that is the central concern of the following thesis, although it recognizes that the cognitive, affective and conative domains cannot be dealt with in mutual isolation, and so both literature and dogma will be considered in their relation to science and the 'scientific attitude' as well as to each other.

The thesis, it must be stated at the outset, is concerned less with details of curriculum content than with principles of curricular orientation. The implications of the principles developed, however, will inevitably have a bearing on content, particularly in relation to the place of literature and of moral and religious education in the curriculum of a technological age.

A series of urgent educational questions upon which Matthew Arnold's ideas would appear to have some bearing are posed later in this Introduction. Part One then details relevant source-material and research on Matthew

Arnold and surveys some of the major developments in moral, religious and 'literary' education up to the present time, setting them within the context of rapid technological advance and cultural change. Part Two proceeds to a descriptive analysis of Literature and Dogma; an account of its reception by Arnold's contemporaries; and a discussion of the significance of the ironical approach by means of which Arnold's ideas are communicated. Part Three is devoted to an analysis of three key concepts: 'literature' in Chapter 7, 'dogma' in Chapter 8, and the Zietgeist (with its accompanying counterpart Weltanschauung) in chapter 9. Arnold's views on the relationship between the 'Time-Spirit' and 'Worldview' and literature and dogma are compared with those of others, and the contemporary significance of their interrelationship is examined. In Part Four some of the curricular implications of Arnold's thought are developed. The educational implications of Arnold's own moral development and epistemological outlook are outlined; the significance of the inclusion of imaginative literature in schools is examined; and the application of 'literary' and 'dogmatic' approaches in Religious Education and Moral Education as well as in other relevant parts of the curriculum is discussed. Finally the principles of 'openness' and 'security' (inherent in the concepts of literature and dogma, respectively) are applied to some consideration of the question of authority in curriculum construction, and to problems of specialisation and integration in the curriculum.

Before surveying some of the work which has already been done - the foundations upon which this thesis will be built - it may be helpful to make one or two general observations to provide a preliminary perspective within which the argument which follows may be viewed.

Matthew Arnold's Literature and Dogma, published in 1873, anticipating the demise of authoritarian dogmatic theology in the face of the advance of scientific and democratic developments, sought to preserve the essence of Christianity and its ethical values by demonstrating that the language of scriptural material was essentially literary, and not scientific. Truths

embodied in poetic form, Arnold argued, must be apprehended by the exercise of literary tact and imagination and not used as the building blocks for metaphysical speculation.

Despite the outcry from both scientific and Christian dogmatists at the time - the book was too 'religious' for the scientists and too scandalously heterodox for the theologians - and despite the relative neglect of Literature and Dogma since, events in the ensuing century have vindicated Arnold's foresight. The proliferation of titles such as The Death of God, The Disappearance of God, The Secularisation of Religion and The Myth of God Incarnate bear witness to the virtual collapse of organized dogmatic theology. But a moral vacuum, disturbing for society in general and for educationists in particular, creates a situation where it is often difficult to provide adequate guidelines for action for the coming generation.

Vastly improved communications and technological advances generally have brought together disparate and sometimes alien communities on a global scale, and in our own society have created a pluralistic, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-faith community, challenging to the utmost our educational resources and capacity for adaption. While Arnold was concerned primarily with the nineteenth century clash between scientific and religious cultural values, his insights are relevant to the problem of culture-clash generally. Furthermore, although Christian theologians are burying most of their dogmatic differences in the interest of ecumenism and adaptation to the prevailing scientific world-view, other dogmas abound, separating nations, communities and groups, to their mutual disadvantage and peril.

This thesis, then, is concerned with education for the acquisition of values capable of meeting the severe demands of our fast-changing contemporary world, and in particular in our own democratic, multicultural society. It seeks to explore two rival approaches to value acquisition - an approach through literature and an approach through dogma - by means of a critical

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examination and application of certain leading ideas of Matthew Arnold, one (as I hope to show) of the most 'modern' and far-sighted of Victorian educationists.

Many of the problems facing Arnold and his contemporaries in England in the 1870s are facing the world at large in the 1970s, and with increasing urgency. This is one justification for adding to the voluminous array of Arnoldian scholarship extant. My further excuse, if one is needed, is that nobody has yet sought to apply the implications of what Arnold believed to be his most important and potentially useful work (Super VI, p.141) Literature and Dogma, to the central concern of his professional life - education.

Educational research should involve - like Arnold's definition of criticism - 'a disinterested endeavour to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world, and thus to establish a current of fresh and true ideas' (Super III, p.282) Our current preoccupation with problems of religious and moral education in a secular society, and of freedom and authority in relation to the school curriculum, make this an opportune time for a disinterested scrutiny of Arnold's own, self-designated 'best', since these, too, were Arnold's preoccupations (although in the context of society at large) in Literature and Dogma. In order to develop an adequate interpretation of Arnold's ideas expressed in Literature and Dogma in relation to the school curriculum, supporting material will be drawn from Arnold's other works wherever relevant, from his criticism, for example, and from his inspectorial Reports on Elementary Schools (Marvin, 1908) and his special reports on continental education (Super II).

Although I will be drawing upon a variety of sources, the scope of this thesis will be limited to considering the implications of literature and dogma alone within the curriculum. There will be no attempt, for example, to cover the whole range of English studies. On the other hand, the use of literature, or a literary approach, within other subject areas, for example in moral and religious education, will be discussed where this

seems appropriate. The concept of dogma will be taken in its widest sense to include ideology in general (see Chapter 8). Where discussion of religious education occurs - its reference will be limited to state schools since voluntary and independent schools have their own terms of reference in this sphere. A further limitation of this study will be to confine discussion to primary and secondary schools, largely ignoring further and higher education, although a number of the implications of the argument would be relevant there too.

It is hoped that an examination of Arnold's later criticism, and notably Literature and Dogma, will throw light on a number of specific questions of current concern in education, and it may be helpful to enumerate some of the more important of these questions here. Firstly, what contribution can imaginative literature make to moral and religious education? Closely related to this question are the recognition (or otherwise) of the place of religious writings within the field of literature; and problems concerned with the justification for religious and moral education in a pluralistic and largely secular society. Secondly, what bearing has an examination of 'literature' and 'dogma' on an 'open' and 'closed' approach to the curriculum at large? This entails some consideration of the balance and compatibility of subjects within the curriculum, and of the relative advantages of specialization and integration. Thirdly, what is the cultural significance of literature, as opposed to dogma, as a means of value-acquisition in relation to anarchy, democracy and totalitarianism? Fourthly, how far in general does Arnold's view of knowledge prefigure modern developments (for example in science and theology) and offer relevant pointers to meeting current educational needs? Subsumed in this area are questions relating to the educational implications of Arnold's own upbringing and subsequent outlook, and the relation between his ironic approach to Literature and Dogma and our contemporary world-view. And lastly, can a case be made out for imaginative literature in schools as 'experience' rather than as examination fodder, and for the

cultivation of a 'literary frame of reference' relevant to the lives and needs of pupils?

CHAPTER ONE

LITERATURE, DOGMA AND EDUCATION: ARNOLDIAN SOURCES AND RESEARCH

Because he was a critic and an educational reformer, Arnold wished to restate the creeds in modern terms, but because he was also a poet he saw that even greater than the need for restatement was the need to conserve, and preserve from destruction, all the beauty and the power of tradition. For this amongst many other reasons, he has worn better than most Victorian liberals, and those religious books of his, now seldom read...still contain matter of importance for all who are concerned today to preserve a spirit of sober piety and rational religion.

Basil Willey, 1949

Arnold...cannot be summarized. I say this with an eye, not on his weaknesses and inconsistencies as a thinker, but on his essential strength. And here we have a reason for his being worth special study. He is not easy to do justice to, and to attempt it seriously is to refine one's understanding of the nature of intelligence...

F R Leavis, 1950

This chapter seeks to place Matthew Arnold's Literature and Dogma in context; to review briefly some of the changing critical reactions to the work; to specify examples of the personal published sources consulted; and to give some indications of relevant educational criticism extant.

In order to keep this thesis within bounds it has been necessary to prune severely from the wide range of material surveyed. There is a good deal of literature about dogma; and no lack of dogma about literature. There are, for example, well over a hundred PhD theses on 'dogmatism in education' stemming from North American universities alone; and getting on for five hundred American PhD theses on the place of literature in education. Since in recent years Matthew Arnold's writings have been given more attention across the Atlantic than in Great Britain, it is not surprising to find nearly a hundred American PhD theses on Arnold, including among those I have had occasion to consult much sensitive, critical evaluation.

Perhaps the best known example of American scholarship on Arnold is Lionel Trilling's work, Matthew Arnold (1939). Originally a PhD thesis, it has since been regarded as a standard criticism by all Arnold scholars.

More recently a valuable contribution to Arnold studies is Tollers (1974) A Bibliography of Matthew Arnold 1932-1970, a well-indexed reference work which I found most helpful in reducing the gaps in my own studies of Arnold. Without any doubt, however, the most important achievement of American scholarship on Arnold is the monumental eleven-volume Complete Prose Work of Matthew Arnold completed in 1977. In editing these volumes, R H Super has drawn on a wide range of scholarship from both sides of the Atlantic and the critical and explanatory notes appended to each volume are extremely helpful for the light they throw on the background to, and the relations between, Arnold's works. Literature and Dogma is located in Volume VI. Unless otherwise stated, for some particular reason, all references quoted in this thesis to Arnold's prose works will be from Professor Super's editions. (This includes Arnold's reports on continental education, but not his Reports on Elementary Schools which were edited by F S Marvin (1908) in a government publication which has not since been superseded.) In his critical and explanatory notes to Literature and Dogma, Super draws together a number of key critical references to the study of this work, and although I had independently consulted many of the sources quoted below before the appearance of Super's work, I must acknowledge here my indebtedness to his helpful selection of pertinent details from the critical material extant. There will inevitably, therefore, be some overlap in references which follow.

The context of Arnold's Literature and Dogma

For details of the circumstances of the publication of Literature and Dogma first in part as a series of essays in the Cornhill Magazine in 1871 and subsequently completed in book form in 1873, the reader is referred to Super's outline (Super VI, pp.448-454). Of more particular importance here, however, are the general cultural and educational background to the publication of Literature and Dogma and the sources upon which Arnold drew for the ideas there expressed. Professor Super draws attention to

the secular and sectarian squabbling attendant upon the bill to introduce the first complete system of compulsory education in Great Britain in 1870. W E Forster, son-in-law of Thomas Arnold and brother-in-law to Matthew, was Vice-President in charge of the Education Department. As a Quaker he was perhaps well fitted to steer the perilous course between secular and sectarian demands. In his parliamentary speech introducing the bill, he referred to three regulations requiring acceptance:

an effectual Conscience Clause; undenominational inspection; a compliance with conditions securing secular efficiency - then no other regulations will be enforced, and, especially, the present restrictions against secular schools will be removed. (Maclure, 1968, p.101)

Sectarian resistance to the removal of these restrictions was to be allayed by adopting the 'dual system' which left denominational schools intact alongside the new secular schools. However, as Super observes, the debate 'upon the question of the sort of religious education that should be required of the new board schools' continued until,

on June 30, 1870, Sir Stafford Northcote's amendment to include the catechism and religious formularies in the instruction provided by rate supported schools was defeated. (Super VI, p.454)

Finally, the famous Cowper-Temple clause was agreed, which laid down that in schools -- 'hereafter established by means of local rates, no catechism or religious formulary which is distinctive to any particular denomination shall be taught' (Maclure, 1968, p.98). Some of the implications of these enactments, and of subsequent developments under the 1944 Education Act will be considered later in this thesis. Suffice here to mention that constitutionally (as a deeply religious, but unorthodox 'liberal' Christian), domestically (as brother-in-law to W E Forster) and professionally (as H.M.I.), Matthew Arnold was deeply involved in these developments as they took place.

Arnold's Culture and Anarchy, then published only recently in 1869, had insisted on the need for 'culture' - wide reading and the harmonious development of all our faculties. When on June 21, 1870, he attended the University of Oxford for an honorary degree of D.C.L. to be conferred

on him by the Chancellor, Lord Salisbury, although he was in Super's words 'naturally gratified by the attention':

some of Salisbury's remarks during the ceremonials of the week led him to conceive that Salisbury was, as he wrote to his mother, 'a dangerous man...chiefly from his want of any true sense and experience of literature and its beneficent function. Religion he knows, and physical science he knows, but the immense work between the two, which is for literature to accomplish, he knows nothing of, and all his speeches at Oxford pointed this way'. (Super VI, p.488)

The idea of developing the theme of the 'beneficent function' of literature as a means of countering dogma and reconciling our 'scientific' and 'religious' propensities was born. It only remained for Arnold's friend J C Shairp to publish a series of lectures in November 1870 under the title Culture and Religion - including consideration of the relationship between science, literature and 'spiritual growth' - for Arnold to join in the debate.

Another factor influencing Arnold's writing of Literature and Dogma was his concern to say something constructive about religion in the face of what often unintentionally proved to be the destructive influence of the 'higher criticism' emanating from Germany but now beginning to lead to somewhat clumsier applications of biblical criticism among English adherents. Arnold had challenged Bishop Colenso's well-intentioned but ultimately destructive 'mathematical' criticism of biblical 'facts and figures' (see Super III, pp.40-55); now it was his turn to show what kind of critical analysis he believed to be more appropriate for scriptural material. At the same time, as Super points out, Arnold's criticism was to include the 'rejection of the strict concept of "inspiration" on the part of the authors of the Bible and...emphasis upon the ethical rather than the metaphysical significance of Scripture.' (Super VI, p.455). In this regard, among others, as Professor Eugene L Williamson, Jr. (1961) shows, Matthew shared his father Thomas Arnold's views: 'for both men, the crown of the Biblical ethic was to be found in the personality and teachings of Jesus.' Similarly Matthew's opposition

to 'religious anthropomorphism' approximates to Dr Arnold's repudiation of 'pantheistic doctrines'. The educational relevance of these and other points raised by Eugene L. Williamson in this, and another paper by him (1960) must await further discussion in chapters 9 and 10 of this thesis.

Distrust of 'divine inspiration' and anthropomorphic metaphor were a fairly natural outcome of Arnold's literary experience and understanding of the nature of myth. As Catherine Runcie (1969) points out in her study of Matthew Arnold and Walter Pater, Arnold

was acquainted with a whole history of opinion on myth and the burgeoning of current views, which Andrew Lang calls the "philological" and the "anthropological" schools of mythology. Arnold knew in the 1840s the mythological findings that are still being assimilated and refined in this century by Cassirer or Jung or Frye. (p.17)

Further reference will later be made to Arnold's sources and links with other writers, notably in chapter 10; but here, in order to give some preliminary indication of the multi-faceted nature of Arnold's writings, it may be instructive to mention some of the names that have been linked with Arnold's in studies of the last two or three decades: Matthew Arnold and Carlyle (Tillotson, 1956), Matthew Arnold and John Stuart Mill (Alexander, 1965), Matthew Arnold and T H Huxley (Armstrong, 1953), Matthew Arnold, John Ruskin and the Modern Temper (Alexander, 1973), Matthew Arnold and Edmund Burke (Tobias, 1957), Matthew Arnold and Ernest Renan: a study of their literary relationship (Dichmann, 1954), etc. etc. He has also been linked with the Cambridge Platonists ('A.M.', 1943), the Oriel Noetics at Oxford (Blackburn, 1946), the German Theologians (via Thomas Arnold) - (Christensen, 1957), and the Romantics (Gottfried, 1958) and (James, 1961), etc.

Professor Basil Willey (1975), one of the most sensitive of modern English critics to Arnold's intentions in Literature and Dogma, gives a brief, helpful list of his main sources of inspiration:

If I were trying to enumerate all the influences that moulded Arnold's mind (he writes) I should have to mention at least Senancour..., George Sand, Spinoza, Goethe, Wordsworth, Newman, Renan and Sainte Beuve... (pp.240-241)

And specifically in relation to Arnold's religious writing he adds: Bishop Butler, Bishop Wilson, Thomas à Kempis, the Cambridge Platonists, and above all the Bible. Some of these connections will be followed up later where they throw light on the educational implications of Arnold's writing.

'The immediate and more remote background' of Literature and Dogma is the theme of an unpublished doctoral dissertation produced at Yale University in 1943 by W M Blackburn. Professor Blackburn makes reference to most of the sources mentioned above in his thesis, and three published articles based upon his findings have been particularly helpful to the writer. That on the Oriel Noetics has already been referred to (Blackburn, 1946); another on 'Bishop Butler and the Design of Arnold's Literature and Dogma' (1948), throws interesting light on Arnold's conception of conscience and his eudaemonian association of right conduct with happiness; and a third entitled 'The Background of Arnold's Literature and Dogma' (1945), discusses the relationship between Arnold's work and the educational débacle and religious controversies of 1870. The problem as to what sort of religious education, if any, was to be provided in the new board schools; the significance of the 'Westminster Scandal' (when the wrath of the dogmatic Bishops of Winchester and Gloucester was aroused because a Unitarian minister had been given Holy Communion in Westminster Abbey by Arnold's friend Dean Stanley); the Athanasian Creed controversy; and the arguments about the catechism and its place in education are shown to be among factors provoking Arnold to write. Professor Blackburn also brings out something of the sympathy of outlook between Arnold and the scientist Thomas Henry Huxley, and of Arnold's hostility to dogmatic religion generally and in particular to the kind of schizophrenic compartmentalization of scientific and religious world-views in the thinking of the influential Lord Salisbury. William Blackburn makes three important observations on Arnold's motivation for writing Literature and Dogma:

We may note (he writes) more particularly: (1) his recognition of the slights which scientifically minded men were putting upon literary studies, a theme which he was to develop for the first time in the opening pages of Literature and Dogma; (2) his recognition also of the "immense work" to be done in reconciling "the old ecclesiastical and dogmatic form of religion" with the new scientific spirit -- by which he means, quite simply, the immense work of teaching people to read the Bible as literature rather than as a collection of theologically scientific data; and (3) his frank acknowledgement of his own role as mediator, "a healing and reconciling influence," between the claims of science and those of religion. (p133)

Changing response to Arnold's Literature and Dogma

Some preliminary account of the sources and motivation of Literature and Dogma has been given; a descriptive analysis of the work itself follows in chapter 4 and so requires no discussion at this point; some indication of the sources consulted in relation to the reception of Literature and Dogma, however, may be appropriate here. In the first place, a survey was made of the Victorian periodicals and journals reviewing Literature and Dogma on its appearance in 1873. The work provoked a lively reception in British and American journals and periodicals and also among Continental critics, and it was instructive to discover the wide range of reactions to it from the highly favourable response in The Contemporary Review* and The Athenaeum to the very hostile condemnation of it in The Guardian. Between these extremes opinion ranged from 'favourable' in The Westminster Review, through 'cool' in The Examiner and The Fortnightly Review to the bemused and sadly critical responses of The Spectator's reviewers and the hostile reception from Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine and The Quarterly Review. These articles were selected to provide a primary spectrum of criticism for chapter 5.

Two theses focusing closely on the reception of Literature and Dogma are those of Gudas (1953) and Coulling (1974). Fabian Gudas discusses not only the reception of Literature and Dogma on its appearance but also Arnold's defence of his position in subsequent writings - notably in God and the Bible (1897)*, Last Essays on Church and Religion (1877)* and

* For references to this and the other reviews mentioned in this paragraph see Chapter 3

* See Super, vols VII and VIII

A Comment on Christmas (1884)* - a defence which had to be conducted in time strenuously wrested from his arduous work of school inspecting.

Gudas considers criticism of Arnold's ideas on religion and morality up to those of Eliot (1933), Trilling (1939), Bonnerot (1947) and Willey (1949). Gudas concludes that:

Much of Arnold's religious criticism was conditioned by current religious controversy. His Biblical exegesis, as a whole, probably can not be defended; nor is it likely that his recommendation for the retention of the Aberglaube of the traditional religion as a poetic symbolism for a new faith likely to be accepted. But a study of Arnold which would consider him as anticipatory of certain twentieth century developments, such as Humanism and Modernism, might show his real significance. (Gudas, 1953, p.363)

From the point of view of religion, Gudas's view expressed here is consistent with Arnoldian criticism at the time, bearing in mind the theological ethos of the first half of this century. But the quarter century since then has seen considerable change in this sphere. Bonnerot saw Arnold as a Humanist; on the other hand Eliot and Trilling rejected the validity of Arnold's version of Christianity; Basil Willey alone of the four critics mentioned above saw ahead to the possibility of Arnold's concept of Christianity finding a more liberal and permissive theological climate, and (in Gudas's words) 'pleads for a serious restudy of Arnold's religious writings by the liberal Christian' (p.362). Gudas, however, mentions George Tyrrell, a 'well-known Catholic Modernist' as being influenced by Arnold, and refers to an article in the liberal Christian Hibbert Journal in which H S Shelton (1946) addressing liberal clergymen, pleads for a 'return to Arnold's religious works as a source of suggestions for the reconstruction of religion which would appeal to the "modern" mind' (p.362).

These hints - straws in the wind in Gudas's thesis - turn out to be much more readily justifiable in the changed theological and philosophical ethos of twenty years later, and Sidney Coulling's study of Matthew Arnold

*See Super, vol. X

and His Critics (1974) is able to be much less defensive about Arnold's theological excursions. Coulling like Gudas allows Arnold to defend his own case against his critics, using the replies embodied in his later works against the criticisms of earlier ones. While by no means uncritical of Arnold's theological writing, Coulling is sensitive to his intentions within the framework of contemporary controversies, regarding Arnold as 'the most adequate of all the Victorians' and admiring the qualities of 'sanity, lucidity, wit and seriousness' (p.301) in Arnold's controversial prose. Even in a purely theological issue - Arnold's re-attribution of the essence of the Fourth Gospel to John (Super VII, chapters 5-6) - 'Arnold is vindicated by twentieth-century scholarship' against the 'radical view of the Tübingen critics' (p.260).

Between the critiques of Gudas and Coulling two significant interpretations of Arnold's Literature and Dogma must be taken into account. The contributions of Dorothea Krook (1959) and William Robbins (1959), published simultaneously, reflect shifting perspectives in both Humanist and theological quarters. In Three Traditions of Moral Thought Krook reappraises F H Bradley's critique of historic Christianity. While both T S Eliot and Trilling had considered that Bradley had exploded Arnold's interpretation, Krook found that 'it was necessary to distinguish between the admirable intention and the subtly inadequate execution of his (Bradley's) critique' (p.294) - a critique which she asserts 'could only be done -as any work of imaginative literature - on the internal literary evidences.' On the other hand, 'in Matthew Arnold's Humanist reinterpretation of historic Christianity...it was Arnold's developed literary intelligence in handling the Bible texts that gave his interpretations their authority and persuasiveness' (p.294). In Krook's view Arnold's account robs orthodox Christianity of some of its saving and motivating power (particularly in relation to the significance of the Church and of prayer) but provides a valuable stepping stone towards a constructive and transforming order of Christian (as distinct

from Anthropological) Humanism, which combines a rational self-coherence with a degree of emotional commitment necessary to provide grounds for hope in the presence of our twentieth century malaise.

In The Ethical Idealism of Matthew Arnold, William Robbins (1959) shows the relation of Arnold's 'imaginative reason' to matters of 'practical import' and applauds 'the interplay of inward self-perfecting and social solidarity' and 'the reiterated plea for the harmonious expansion of all our powers' (p.212) among other positive qualities of Arnold's religious writing. In Robbins' view 'the practical idealism of (Arnold's) values can give meaning and purpose to education, which too often has neither, and it can be a means of reconciling the persisting differences of Christian, scientist and humanist' (p.213).

Both Krook and Robbins were writing from the point of view of Humanism - albeit Christian Humanism; but when we come to consider changes in theological outlook more directly in chapter 8 and in attitudes within religious education in chapter 2, it will be evident that on the whole the Zeitgeist has been on Matthew Arnold's side in these matters. This would have pleased Arnold. In The Time-Spirit of Matthew Arnold, R H Super (1970) says of Arnold that 'his description of himself as being in the main stream of modern thought was a fair estimate' (p.90), adding that 'one does not make the stream one floats in, but one may choose it'. Super believes that Arnold chose the right current:

By perceiving what elements of nineteenth-century liberalism gave promise for the twentieth century, he became, not only what he called Emerson, "the friends and aider of those who would live in the spirit", but the best representative, among the Victorians, of the modern spirit. (pp.90-91)

Fraser Neiman would largely agree with this, although in The Zeitgeist of Matthew Arnold (1959), he points out that Arnold is not always consistent in his use of the term 'Zeitgeist'. Essentially it is a shorthand term for the 'phenomenon of change' and the 'historical process' but Arnold's use of this concept, and its peculiar significance for the twentieth century will be discussed in some detail in chapter 9. Suffice here to mention,

however, that Neiman recognizes in Arnold's use of the term Zeitgeist in Literature and Dogma a useful ambivalence which enables him to relate the will and purpose of man to that of God. (It is worth mentioning here, perhaps, that Arnold's definition of 'God' is also usefully ambivalent, facilitating its use today by many Christians and Humanists alike.)

Before reviewing more specifically educational material drawn upon for this thesis it is necessary to indicate other works of a general nature relating to Arnold which it was found necessary and helpful to consult.

Arnold's Notebooks and other personal evidence

Clearly the Notebooks of Matthew Arnold (Lowry, 1952) throw valuable light on Arnold's thinking in relation to 'literature' and to 'dogma' generally, and in particular to his preoccupations at the time of writing Literature and Dogma itself, and related works. The need, for example, to resolve the tension between Arnold's conflicting rational and religious predispositions is suggested by the juxtaposition of two entries in Arnold's notebooks early in 1870: one a quotation from Ernest Renan, the other from the rational Comtist, Littré:

La somme incomparable de goût pour le bien que le Christianisme a inspiré! Quand on songe à ce miracle, nulle hyperbole sur l'excellence de Jésus ne paraît illégitime. (Renan)

En place des anciennes croyances s'est élevée la grande conception des lois naturelles qui gouvernent toutes choses, et desquelles on n'obtient rien par la prière mais beaucoup par la science et par le travail. (Littré, p.127)

The stark contrast between a religious and a scientific world-view here needs no comment, except perhaps to note that Renan's emphasis is on the moral rather than the sacerdotal efficacy of Christianity, and his 'miracle' is a fairly naturalistic one. 'Natural' religion is central to the outlook of both Arnold and Renan; and an entry in the Notebook shortly before that from Renan hints at Arnold's distrust of dogma: 'Let our discourse of religion be practical rather than notional or disputing' (p.126) is taken, as are many other quotations dear to Arnold,

from Bishop Wilson's Sacra Privata. Other entries in the same year support this leaning. It seems, for example, to be inherent in some words quoted from Thomas à Kempis' De Imitatione: 'Audi verbum meum, et non curabis decem millia verba hominum' (p.132 of the Notebooks). Later the same year Littré is again quoted apparently with approval, since the view represented is that embodied in Literature and Dogma.

De même que, dans l'ancienne loi, la crainte du Seigneur est le commencement de la sagesse, de même, dans l'ère modern, ce regret (le regret de perdre en spéculations vaines les forces effectives de l'intelligence) est le commencement de la vraie philosophie. (Notebooks, p. 144)

And the following year, 1871, we even find a quotation from Arnold's adversary, Edward Miall (writing in The Times) with which Arnold apparently felt in tune:

Men of course will have their thoughts and maintain them. I blame no man for the religious opinions he holds, but when his religious opinions or convictions are imposed upon the consciences, or even the conveniences, of his fellow-men, then I do blame them. (p160)

This we know from Arnold's opinion of the University Test Act is precisely Arnold's own view of dogmatic assertiveness and compulsion.

In contrast with his aversion to dogma, the Notebooks at this period reflect Arnold's concern with 'conduct' as the basic desideratum of religion. William Beveridge is quoted early in 1870: 'Play no longer with religion, as people commonly do, but set upon the practice of it in good earnest. As ye profess to believe the Gospel, live according to the rules and precepts of it' (Notebooks, p.129). And some words of Goethe in the same strain follow soon afterwards: 'Es ist nicht genug zu wissen, man muss auch anwenden; es ist nicht genug zu wollen, man muss auch thun' (p.135) This entry, incidentally is underlined.

Herbert Spencer's (1950) famous question: 'What knowledge is of most worth?' - always a key educational question - finds echo in an entry in Arnold's notebook in 1871: 'Da mihi, Domino, scire quod sciendum est' (p.147). This entry from De Imitationi has a slightly more pious ring, but perhaps a deeper intention, than Spencer's question.

However, we know from the first part of Literature and Dogma now already published (Arnold, 1871) that Arnold has already decided that 'letters', or 'literature' is of most worth, or at least of more worth than dogma.

An entry in 1871 quotes Napoleon evidently with approval:

Napoleon said: J'aime les sciences mathématiques et physiques: chacune d'elles est une belle application partielle de l'esprit humain; mais les lettres, c'est l'esprit humain lui-même, c'est l'éducation de l'âme.

(Notebooks, p.163)

And in a similar vein the 'religious' potentialities of artistic creation, as of 'nature', are implicit in an entry from Michelet's Histoire de France occurring at the beginning of 1873 (contemporaneously with the publication of Literature and Dogma in book form): 'Qu'il y ait dans la nature, dans l'art (nature humanisée), des éléments religieux et les bases de la foi profonde, c'est ce qui ne vient a l'esprit de personne'. (Notebooks, p.190)

An interesting entry fairly early on in 1870 evokes Arnold's concern with the conflicting claims for attention - with clear curricular implications - of science and religion:

People ask: What can the Bible teach us about electricity, or the duty of voting, or any of the great elements of modern scientific enquiry? It does not undertake to teach those subjects. It implies that moral elements are the master elements of the human soul; that when they are developed and rightly trained, the whole mass will go rightly; and the Bible attempts simply to inspire and guide the moral centres of the mind. (Notebooks, p.133)

Taken from a sermon by H W Beecher, these words echo the pre-eminence given to the moral side of religion throughout Arnold's own writing.

Other notebook entries of this period show the Humanistic bent of Arnold's Christianity in seeking 'the Kingdom of heaven' on earth (p.141, Edouard Reuss) rather than, as Renan fears all too common (Notebooks, p.141) in the popular conception of a glorious Second Coming; his concern for improving the conditions of society and reconciling conflicting interests (Notebooks, p.159, George Sand); his belief in the cultivation of the spiritual side of life; in finding happiness through cheerful right conduct combined with self-restraint; his search for simplicity amidst the multiplicity of forms, events and activities thronging our lives; his willingness to empathise with alternative

points of view to those current (e.g. looking at western Christianity through the eyes of an Afghan Muslim), and so on.

It is scarcely possible to study Arnold the theological or social critic, or Arnold the educationist, without some reference at least to Arnold the poet, and here I have found Kenneth Allott's collected edition (Arnold, 1965) particularly helpful. 'The Scholar-Gipsy', for example, based on a story from Joseph Glanvill's The Vanity of Dogmatizing, throws some light on Arnold's interest in different kinds of knowledge and the relation of these to happiness, although written a score of years before Arnold explored somewhat similar problems in Literature and Dogma. 'Rugby Chapel', written in 1857, is relevant to an understanding of the relationship between Matthew and his father Thomas Arnold (see chapter 10). And as Super (1970) has shown there is considerable consistency between Arnold's view of the Zeitgeist in his religious writings and in his major poem 'Empedocles on Etna'.

Arnold, like many Victorians, was a fairly prolific letter-writer and reference will inevitably be made from time to time in the following pages to his correspondence. The main sources for Arnold's published letters are Lowry (1932), Russell (1896) and Whitridge (1923) and (unless otherwise stated) references given in this thesis will be to one of these texts.

Although Arnold expressly requested that no biography should be written on him, biographical elements in critical works on Arnold have inevitably grown longer and fuller with the passage of time, and a number of works, not designedly biographies, provide helpful background material on the life of Arnold. Works which, either explicitly or implicitly, have been particularly helpful for the present thesis include: Stanley (1893), Jump (1965), Bush (1971), Trevor (1973), Allott (Ed., 1975), and Rowse (1976). A number of other works of this kind consulted will be quoted from time to time, and all those which have materially influenced this thesis are included in the Bibliography.

Criticism of Arnold's educational writings

Turning now to specifically educational writings on Matthew Arnold it is interesting that although references - and often extensive references - to Matthew Arnold feature widely in educational literature, there are surprisingly few educational studies devoted entirely to him. Among the earlier ones is an anthology chosen by Leonard Huxley (1912): Thoughts on Education chosen from the writings of Matthew Arnold. Emboldened no doubt by Marvin's edition of Arnold's Reports (1908) and encouraged by a Mr Theodore Reunert, Leonard Huxley sought 'to collect into a single volume the most striking passages on matters educational from (Arnold's) published writings and from Blue-books' (p.vii). This un-anotated, though well-indexed, selection includes in its brief preface a reference to 'Matthew Arnold's repeated insistence on the value of literature and especially poetry as a humanising force in education', and in view of this it includes 'several passages of literary criticism to show what kind of poetry (Arnold) had in mind as possessing the highest formative power' (p.viii). The preface itself waxes quite poetical in its description of Matthew Arnold:

In the public eye he was not the School Inspector, but the man of letters, the champion of a high cause; he was equipped not merely with educational formulas, but with wide-ranging ideas; armed, too, with memorable phrases and stinging epigrams for the knotted cords with which to drive the profane and mere money-changers from the sanctuary of the human spirit. (pp.v-vi).

Typically, three of the most significant educational studies of Arnold stem from overseas: Walcott's (1945, 1970) from Michigan, North America, and Connell's (1950) from Melbourne, Australia. Walcott's lifelong interest in Arnold's educational significance is evinced by his Michigan dissertation in 1945 ('Matthew Arnold and the Growth of Democratic Education in England') and his relatively recent work, The Origins of Culture and Anarchy: Matthew Arnold and Popular Education in England published in 1970. Although in the latter study Walcott barely mentions Literature and Dogma, he refers frequently to Arnold's concern for literature as a prime means of nourishing intelligence, the emotions

and good taste, and for diffusing 'sweetness and light' (to use Arnold's term). He comments on 'an aura of regret' discernible in Arnold's reports on Schools and Universities on the Continent - 'a sad, enduring awareness that in England the humanizing power of letters was so little understood' (p.101); and observes elsewhere:

One is inclined to ponder the persistent faith in the power of letters Arnold so steadily maintained as he made the dreary round of the schools, for nowhere was the effect to be observed. He spoke as from the prompting of an inner voice emerging out of his own experience (pp.60-61)

Nevertheless, while 'Arnold's concern for the beneficent influence of letters should hardly surprise us,' Walcott adduces evidence to remind us that Arnold's 'cultural aim was even broader in scope; it embraced the practical and the utilitarian as well as the literary studies' (p.103). Walcott also stresses Mathew Arnold's concern for the atmosphere in which the schoolchild's studies are undertaken:

Temperamentally (he writes) Arnold favoured the kind and generous teacher. Rigorism, in its stern, ascetic sense, was foreign to his nature. He had a strong antipathy for the disciplinary motive in examinations, and he thought that English boys were crammed and examined to the point of surfeit and dullness (p.100)

On the whole Arnold's educational ideas are subjected to closer critical scrutiny in W F Connell's The Educational Thought and Influence of Matthew Arnold (1950), probably the most important critical interpretation of Arnold's educational work to date. Although Connell occasionally 'misses the point' where Walcott might apprehend it intuitively, this study is generally as sensitive as it is comprehensive. Connell regards Arnold as 'not merely a Liberal of the Future, but an Educationalist of the Future also' (p.280). In his conclusion he adduces three main areas within English education which Arnold had regarded as 'making an inadequate response' to the needs of the times: 'It lacked responsible organisation, it lacked a due appreciation of its task as a humanising agent, and it lacked a social consciousness' (p.280).

In respect of the second of these shortcomings, which is our main concern here, it was the mechanical functioning of the Revised Code, with its 'payment by results' based on the annual examination of pupils,

that was one of the main targets for Arnold's censure. The routine cramming for these examinations militated against both breadth and depth of literary culture in schools. 'In his treatment of literature,' writes Connell, Arnold 'showed how a direct application of his concept of culture should be made. The pursuit of our total perfection through our getting to know the best which has been thought and said in the world should be carried out in school by attention to the best models of classical English poetry suitable for the age and attainments of the pupils' (p.183). Having developed rather more fully some of Arnold's exalted views on poetry in school, Connell comments wryly, and not without some justice, 'In making such assertions Arnold appears to have let his enthusiasm for his own craft temporarily master his better judgment' (p.183). The spread of elementary educational facilities increased with the Elementary Education Act of 1870, and Connell reminds us that 'it was during these years that (Arnold) suggested the treatment of the Bible as literature and its careful use as a source of elevation and inspiration' (p.183). Notice that, amidst the furious rivalries of theological and secular debate, it is the Bible as literature that Arnold recommends. Referring in an earlier chapter to Literature and Dogma, Connell writes that Arnold 'proceeded to jettison from Christianity all belief in miracle and prophecy, all metaphysical speculation, the divinity of Christ, the Trinity, redemption, resurrection, everything in fact that pertained to theology' (p.145). Having isolated and eliminated by literary tact and criticism all that is Aberglaube ('extra-belief' or superstition) we find that: 'What we need to retain, and indeed the only thing that hard-headed practical artisans would wish to retain in the Bible is whatever can be shown to ^{be} verifiable in experience' (p.145). Here Connell is oversimplifying somewhat: while Arnold certainly wished to reject the theological speculation which was extraneous to the Bible he hoped to encourage an adequate literary interpretation and apprehension of the scriptures themselves so that what was Aberglaube would be fully

appreciated as poetry instead of as science.

Connell saw clearly the reasoning behind Arnold's particular kind of balancing of the claims of scientific and literary studies, in which while in Arnold's view both were necessary, the humanities should always have the edge on 'instrumental' studies. Scientific provision, Connell interprets Arnold, 'must not be made at the expense of the study of literature':

As the claims of technical education, and the voices of the advocates of scientific instruction grew more insistent, Arnold foresaw an increasing pressure to substitute natural science for literature. It was true that the teaching of science appeared to be more immediately useful in the improvement of health and living conditions, and for the maintenance of England's threatened leadership of the industrial world, but without the power that letters exert there would be no corresponding development in humanity, no growth towards greater human understanding and perfection. (p.202)

Similarly, Connell seems to have a deeper understanding of Arnold's particular approach to democratic and egalitarian principles than a number of other critics. Much nonsense is written about Arnold's concentrating his attention upon education for the middle classes and working for an intellectual élite to raise and maintain standards. Such an interpretation ignores the practicalities of the situation in which Arnold found himself working. If we take account of the conditions of the time we shall see that Arnold was working not for an élite, but inevitably through an élite in the first instance. It seemed to Arnold that leadership must come from the middle classes but for this to be effective state intervention would be necessary to improve the quality of middle-class education, taking it out of the hands of the Gradgrinds and Creakles whose establishments, made notorious by Dickens, lacked 'culture', 'dignity' and 'ideas'. Connell's common-sense in interpreting Arnold's conception is refreshing:

In the light of later developments it would be a bold thing to say (Arnold) was wrong. The middle class of to-day is somewhat differently constituted and certainly larger as compared with that of Arnold's time. Nor can its upper and lower boundaries be clearly defined. It would be extravagant to suggest that the effect of Secondary Education For All, imaginatively and consistently carried out, will result in the whole nation becoming middle class! That might not be a desirable consummation. However, Arnold's idea of equality is relevant here. In

emphasizing it he was clearly not thinking so much of economic condition as of culture, conceiving of a common culture in which all alike genuinely shared, and to which each, in the measure of his capacity, made his contribution. For a social democracy this would not seem to be an undesirable ideal and there are signs that we have already made some progress towards it. (p.xiv)

Whereas Bantock (1952) seeks to use Arnold in support of a hard-headed authoritarian and élitist approach to education against what he regards as the pervasive influence of 'comparatively superficial thinkers like Dewey', Connell regards Arnold's 'emphasis upon the progressive elevation of society', his 'insistence upon "growth"' as in line with Dewey's thinking, observing that Arnold 'would have approved of the statement of John Dewey that "the criterion of the value of school education is the extent in which it creates the desire effective in fact"' (p.279)* Walsh (1964) praises Arnold and Watson (1973) condemns him for taking an élitist view of literary culture; but Connell's recognition of the 'growth' element in Arnold's approach calls in question whether Arnold can be called élitist at all. In my own view, which I hope to demonstrate, Arnold is not ultimately élitist, and the implications of his conception of the relation between literary culture and society go well beyond the provision of ammunition for those who would seek to promote an educational élite. Williams (1961), whose view of education would be far from this, believes that 'we shall, if we are wise, continue to listen to' Arnold, affirming that 'we can hardly speak better than in his own best spirit': 'For if we centre our attention on a tradition of thinking rather than on an isolated man, we shall not be disposed to underrate what he did and what he represented, or to neglect what he urged us, following him, to do' (p.136)

The curious diversity of views on Arnold indicated above are

*Connell's quotation is taken from John Dewey's Democracy and Education (1929), p.62. Connell's footnote observes that 'Dewey gave much attention to Arnold's work, and frequently quotes him with approval.' Among other things Dewey 'approved of Arnold's emphasis upon literature, but complained of his neglect of scientific method as a leading element in culture.'

partially explained by Leavis (1950):

Arnold...cannot be summarized. I say this with an eye, not on his weaknesses and inconsistencies as a thinker, but on his essential strength. And here we have a reason for his being worth special study. He is not easy to do justice to, and to attempt it seriously is to refine one's understanding of the nature of intelligence...' (p.36)

According to Leavis, Arnold has suffered from a good deal of unfairness because:

...he has been judged by inappropriate criteria, as if he offered what he doesn't, and as if a critic who fails of logical rigour and strictness of definition is left with no respectable function of intelligence that he might be performing. The flexibility, the sensitiveness, the constant delicacy of touch for the concrete in all its complexity, the intelligence that is inseparably one with an alert and fine sense of value -these qualities, however severe the criticism to be brought against him, are exemplified by Arnold; and it is the reader of literary critical training who should find them a challenge to appreciation. (p.38)

But with the observations of Walsh, Watson, Williams and Leavis we have moved into the realms of higher education, and although the implications of study in higher education flow into the curriculum of the schools, further discussion of this must be postponed in favour of brief reference to three relatively recent anthologies of Arnold's writings on education: those of Gribble (1967), Smith and Summerfield (1969) and Sutherland (1973).

James Gribble's Matthew Arnold is one of a series aiming to present 'the writings of major educational philosophers': its introduction, therefore, might well be felt to come within the category of critiques in which Arnold is (in Leavis's words) 'judged by inappropriate criteria,' for Arnold never thought of himself as a philosopher, archly confessing himself, in Culture and Anarchy for example, to be 'sadly to seek' in 'a philosophy with coherent, interdependent, subordinate, and derivative principles' (Super V, p.76). Arnold's 'confession' is partly ironic self-defence, but partly a plain statement of fact: principles he had; but he eschewed 'systems' and mistrusted 'system-makers' (see chapter 10). Gribble, while aware that Arnold was principally an educational propagandist for necessary reforms and

improvements, seems curiously unable to take account of Arnold's sense of audience. One of the principal reasons for Arnold's notorious 'inconsistencies', it seems to me, is that in order to sway his audience of the moment towards a particular measure, or point of view, he had to carry them along with him in other areas of his discourse. No one is won to a new point of view by total opposition, and so Arnold was obliged to tailor his presentation to include sufficient of his audience's outlook in order for them to accept the new or controversial element. Since he addressed a wide variety of audiences his lectures and writings therefore embody traces of a wide variety of viewpoints. This doesn't render his writings less useful; but it makes their interpretation more complex. Each must be read with a sense of its specific intention, and with an awareness of the Zeitgeist. Gribble apparently knew this, stating explicitly that 'there is a certain unfairness in picking inconsistencies in Arnold's work, written as it was over a number of years with differing polemical purposes in mind' - yet he tends to blunder through Arnold's ideas with a kind of humourless puritan obduracy.

Certainly Gribble does a service to education[^] thought in laying bare some of Arnold's grosser shortcomings: his tendency to overstate the case for literature in schools in order to ensure its survival amidst the dominance of the fact-mongers; his somewhat fixed notions about 'the constitution of human nature' in respect to predilections for literary versus scientific studies; his adherence to the then current 'transfer of training' theories; and his somewhat embarrassing objections to 'Americanization' - although the sustained interest in Arnold in America suggests that Americans know what he meant! Gribble's objection to Arnold's concern for middle class secondary education to be assumed by the state without a similar drive for working class secondary education seems to ignore the realities of the situation: Arnold, working within a strict class system and severe economic restrictions on government spending wanted results; and the fact that we can with

hindsight look back in judgment on the Victorians from a relatively democratic situation is a tribute to those, including Arnold, who did work pragmatically for results. Gribble's use of terms like 'vagueness' and 'ambivalence' is critically justifiable while at the same time (as has been suggested) explicable in terms of Arnold's intentions; but terms also used such as 'two-faced' and 'fraudulent' seem unnecessarily emotive and unjustifiable. When Arnold writes that 'the highly instructed few, and not the scantily-instructed many, will ever be the organ to the human race of knowledge and truth' in any depth, Gribble concludes that for Arnold 'the distinction between the "superior man" and the "general public" must be maintained' (p.22). But Arnold was not expressing a desideratum but a fact of life; and a fact of life which within all possible limits, as we shall see, he was desirous to change. He was not eager to limit instruction to the few and deny it to the many (as Gribble seems to imply), but to widen its reach and scope by steady, successive development. 'The "man of culture" is not necessarily a specialist in Arnold's view, Gribble reminds us, - 'rather, he labours "to divest knowledge of all that was harsh, uncouth, difficult, abstract, professional, exclusive"' (p.22). To which Gribble adds, 'An odd mixture of adjectives, this: but rather than tilt at words, let us examine what Arnold did in the role of literary critic...' (ibid). It seems to me that a closer examination of the words, however 'odd' they may seem at first sight would have proved instructive; but such an examination would not have advanced Gribble's argument and so it was laid aside. This point, however, will be taken up again in chapter 6 (p.194) of this thesis.

Again, Gribble is critical of 'tensions' in Arnold's thinking (e.g. Gribble, pp24-25) as though there is something reprehensible in seeing two points of view at once, and recognizing the complexity of life. This, it seems to me is one of Arnold's strong points: one of the arguments in favour of literary study at all. It will be discussed

in chapters 6 and 7 of this thesis.

Gribble's anthology is thoughtfully selected and his introduction is probably more vigorous and challenging than the somewhat blander introduction of Smith and Summerfield's Matthew Arnold and the Education of the New Order (1969) and Gillian Sutherland's anthology Matthew Arnold on Education (1973): but Gribble's stance is philosophical and the two later anthologies historical, and so more sensitive to the Zeitgeist and to Arnold's intentions.

The introduction to Gillian Sutherland's anthology Matthew Arnold on Education (1973) concentrates on setting Arnold's work securely in its historical perspective. We are told that 'the interest of Arnold's writing on education lies in his development of a powerful elitist argument from an essentially class-structured view of English society' (p.9): but the careful delineation we are given of the circumstances makes it clear that Arnold is not adopting this position ex nihilo but these are essentially the conditions of any educational enterprise at that time. 'He saw the decay of the old aristocratic leadership as an inevitable concomitant of democracy; the filling of the vacuum, the creation of a middle class fit to lead, not only in a political sense but in a cultural and moral sense also, was thus the central problem for a would-be democratic society.' (p.15) Sutherland also recognizes that 'Arnold's development as a poet and literary critic' is a 'factor of importance in understanding the development of Matthew Arnold's thinking on education' (p.16) Culture and Anarchy is printed in full in this anthology since it includes, as well as an analysis of society, something of Arnold's exploration of the significance of literary culture. Finally Sutherland concludes:

(Arnold's) analysis of the existing situation in England was a sophisticated one; and the peculiar interest and importance of his social criticism lies in the interplay between his vision and this analysis... It is the combination of this analysis with the absolute nature of his vision of culture that makes his plea for the creation of a national system of education, to form and direct the new elite, so powerful (p.17)

Smith and Summerfield, like Sutherland, stress Arnold's dissatisfaction with the status quo ("We shall die in the wilderness," he wrote, "but to have desired to enter...(the Promised Land), to have saluted it from afar, is already, perhaps, the best distinction among contemporaries" (p.29)); his readiness in his delicate post as Inspector to take risks for what he believed in ("If", he wrote to his wife on 28 March 1862, "thrown on the world I daresay we should be on our legs again before long. Anyway, I think I owed as much as this to a cause in which I have now a deep interest, and always shall have, even if I cease to serve it officially." (pp.34-35)); his concern to improve the life of the working class through the agency of a transformed middle class, employing them against the entrenched power of the aristocracy as - "a moving force against an inert and unprogressive force, a force of ideas against the less spiritual forces of established power, antiquity, prestige and social refinement" (p.10).

Smith and Summerfield see a unity in Arnold's work: 'His social and, indeed, his literary criticism, and his education writings are interdependent, are mutually illuminating, and both form part of a body of thought the terms of which are not always capable of exact definition, but which nevertheless possesses a real coherence' (p.1). In particular they acknowledge Arnold's desire to attack rigidity and dogma through the medium of imaginative new ideas and the power of literary culture, quoting from Arnold's essay on Heine (Super III, pp.107-132):

Modern times find themselves with an immense system of institutions, established facts, accredited dogmas, customs, rules, which have come to them from times not modern. In this system their life has to be carried forward; yet they have a sense that this system is not of their own creation, that it by no means corresponds exactly with the wants of their actual life, that, for them, it is customary, not rational...To remove this want of correspondence is beginning to be the settled endeavour of most persons of good sense. Dissolvents of the old European system of dominant ideas and facts we must all be, all of us who have any power of working; what we have to study is that we may not be acrid dissolvents of it. (Smith and Summerfield, p.4)

In quoting this passage from Arnold, Smith and Summerfield have alighted on the central concern of all Arnold's later criticism; and certainly

the prime issue in Literature and Dogma.

In the foregoing necessarily condensed survey of criticism relating to the background and reception of Literature and Dogma; of sources of general material necessary for any study of Matthew Arnold; and of Arnoldian criticism specifically within the field of education I have tried to bring together the main issues with which this thesis will be concerned. First, Arnold's recognition that the Time Spirit (or Zeitgeist) was changing the world-view (Weltanschauung) of Western Europe at a faster rate than many of his contemporaries could appreciate. Secondly, that it was important to ease-in the inevitable and desirable era of democracy without undermining the principle of authority necessary to maintain order and a degree of harmony in society, and without destroying whatever was worthy of preservation of our inheritance from the past. Thirdly, Arnold's faith that culture, with literature as its main ingredient, was the best non-acrid dissolvent of outworn rigidities and dogmas impeding social progress. Fourthly that religion, morality and science are all important constituents of human life, and that literary criticism associated with breadth of culture, could be a means towards reconciling Christian, scientific and Humanistic points of view and creating a liberal, tolerant and progressive society. And fifthly, that education for all (but spearheaded by secondary education to 'transform' the middle classes) was a vital means of promoting the necessary culture.

It is clear that these areas of Arnold's concern are all closely interlinked. The fast changing world-view was the result of a growing scientific outlook dependent upon objective verification of data; and this extended demand for verification entailed a weakening of submission to authority, facilitated the growth of a democratic spirit, reduced susceptibility to superstition and questioned established dogma. The questioning of orthodoxies threatened to undermine the social fabric - thus making demands on education - and culture - to renew or replace challenged values and their sanctions.

It now remains to consider whether this state of affairs still pertains in any respects, and if so to sketch out those areas of current educational concern within which a fuller, critical discussion of Arnold's outlook can be of service.

CHAPTER TWO

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN A SCIENTIFIC AGE:THE CONTEMPORARY SCENE

Men who are, the carriers of vastly different cultural traditions are entering the present age at the same point in time....We must create new models for adults who can teach their children not what to learn but how to learn and not what they should be committed to, but the value of commitment.

Margaret Mead: Culture and Commitment (1970)

What we need to recognise is that open-ended conditions of debate (in which the tutor can exercise no pressure open or covert, and into which it is desirable that he should introduce "some element of satire or irony...to prick any incipient self-inflation") offer the best hope of future moral growth in a society without agreed values.

Christian Commitment in Education
Methodist Conference Commission
on Education, (1970)

The challenge of change for education

A survey of relevant educational literature suggests that the conditions indicated at the conclusion of the previous chapter, which perturbed Arnold, not only persist today, but that their magnitude and pace have markedly increased. In Child of Our Times (1959) W D Wall took it as his central thesis that: 'not merely was the whole psychological atmosphere changed after the first World War but that, in the last half-century, Western man has been called upon to digest alterations in the structure of his daily life of a magnitude to which we can find no parallel in the past and at a speed which seems to be accelerating' (p.17). In the same year the Crowther Report (Ministry of Education, 1959) spoke of 'the impact of technology on general education' and of 'the emphasis that it places on the rapidity of change', pointing out that if a boy enters industry 'the job he will hold when he becomes a grandfather may not exist at all today; it will be concerned with processes not yet invented, using machines still to be designed...' (para.79). Four years later the Newsom Report (Ministry of Education, 1963), emphasizing the pressures exerted upon youth by such changes, added that 'the mysteries of one generation become the commonplaces of life to their

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grandchildren' (p.5). Moreover there is a growth of cynicism among the young (particularly those 'of poor academic ability') brought about by the intensive barrage of propaganda to which they are subjected:

They feel that they are being got at, that they are not being told the truth, or at least only carefully doctored truth. They develop a protective cynicism which leads them to disbelieve everything...(para 508)

The Report recommends that 'an elementary training in evidence and how to handle it' would provide some defence against this.

The Plowden Report (DES, 1967), three years later, indicates two contrary aspects of the rapid changes occurring:

Future society will be...marked by rapid and far reaching economic and social change...likely to be richer than now, with even more choice of goods, with tastes dominated by majorities and with more leisure for all...(but)...We can fear that it will be much engrossed with the pursuit of material wealth, too hostile to minorities, too dominated by mass opinion and too uncertain of its values. (p.185)

A similarly ambivalent view is taken by Wall (1977) in his Constructive Education for Adolescents where he speaks of 'the old structures of guidance and indoctrination present in more simple and more coherent societies' having broken down:

This is perhaps fortunate, in that the possibilities exist for much more subtle and much more autonomous forms of human personality. But the absence of clear guidance or norms makes development a much more individual matter and it is beset by many hazards'. (p.59)

Earlier in Adolescents in School and Society (1968) Wall had written of society's perplexity as to what standards to set, and of the effect of this on young people: 'For many, if not most adolescents, there is considerable insecurity and anxiety produced by society's uncertainty about to how handle the young, and the role to which they should be assigned, the confusion of values, behavior patterns, ethical and religious beliefs' (p.68). But in any case (if we revert to the Crowther Report (1959)) 'whatever the reasons, neither adults nor teenagers are willing nowadays to take very much on authority - that is to say as far as their conscious minds are concerned' (para.65, pp.42-43).

In The Redemption of the Robot (1970), Herbert Read develops this theme in its historical context in a passage which, for a number of

reasons pertinent to this thesis, it seems worth quoting at length:

Within the Christian Weltanschauung, a development of the whole man was possible. But in the course of time, with the growth of scientific humanism and secularism, the church relinquished its control over intellectual education, retaining only the sphere of moral education... During the nineteenth century, and at an increasing pace during our own century, the Christian church lost its authority within the States of Europe, and as a consequence it relinquished its essential function in society, the moral education of children. For all practical purposes moral education, in all but a few isolated communities, has entirely disappeared from our modern civilization...(p.215).

With moral education relinquished by the church and largely discarded by the 'civilized' community at large:

in our present state of moral indecision, or moral atrophy as it should be called, no universal (i.e. politically effective) recognition is given to any moral values; or such recognition as is given is of a purely intellectual character, and has no emotional 'sanction' (p.223).

In other words there is now neither authority nor emotional motivation to support moral education, even where such exists. For Herbert Read the 'Robot' (twentieth century man) will only be 'redeemed' by creativity - the aesthetic and imaginative ordering of experience, a point which will be taken up later (see chapters 7 and 11). For W D Wall (1975), too, creativity - but in terms of 'dynamic adjustability' - provides a 'compass' for a chartless future:

We can no longer provide children in our schools with a map - moral philosophical, religious or cognitive - by which they can guide themselves into a known future; we have in fact to equip them with a compass and the ability and confidence to use it to find their own way in a world the nature of which we cannot predict' (p.322).

The authority of science and scientific education

The future is chartless because 'Science', which must be open to constant revision, is enthroned as the ultimate authority to which we now appeal for judgment. Where Copernicus and Galileo could be judged and dismissed by an appeal to theology; theology is now more often than not judged by an appeal to 'Science'. To put it crudely, the boot is now on the other foot. As C A Coulson (1960) has observed in Science and Christian belief, 'Science becomes the cohesive force in modern society, the ground on which may be built a secure way of life for man and for communities' (p.20), and therefore, 'If we are to restore faith to men,

it will be through science' (p.21). Sometimes (though never with Coulson) this attempt assumes a crude and naive form, as for example if a fundamentalist seeks to 'prove' the story of Noah's Ark and the animals by reference to Sir Leonard Woolley's painstaking archaeological excavations of the Flood site at Ur. More often the association is more complex.

Alan Richardson (1950) for example, writes:

The Christian religion itself has been studied intensively by means of modern scientific method in the theological faculties of our universities and in our theological colleges, and Christian theology is as 'scientific' in its method as is the study of chemistry or biology today' (p.23)

A somewhat similar appeal to science, though now as an indirect arbiter, occurs when E L Mascall (1967) affirms that 'Dr W H Thorpe has recorded his judgment that "a far higher proportion than formerly of practising biologists are, at least in this country, active and concerned members of various Christian communities and communions" and this is, I think, true no less of physical than of biological scientists' (p.193).

Sometimes, as in the writings of Sir Oliver Lodge (1911), 'science' is, so to speak transposed into 'religion':

For consider what is involved in the astounding idea of Evolution and Progress as applied to the whole universe. Either it is a fact or it is a dream. If it be a fact, what an illuminating fact it is! God is one; the universe is an aspect and a revelation of God. The universe is struggling upward to a perfection not yet attained. I see in the mighty process of evolution an eternal struggle towards more and more self-perception, and fuller and more all-embracing Existence - not only on the part of what is customarily spoken of as Creation - but, in so far as Nature is an aspect and revelation of God, and in so far as Time has any ultimate meaning or significance, we must dare to extend the thought of growth and progress and development even up to the height of all that we can realize of the Supernal Being' (pp.187-88).

The paradox is that the new authority, 'Science', must by its very nature deny authority: hence the banishment of any absolute charts for the future. Coulson (1960) quotes T H Huxley on this point:

The improver of natural knowledge absolutely refuses to acknowledge authority as such. For him scepticism is the highest of duties; blind faith the unpardonable sin. And it cannot be otherwise, for every great advance in natural knowledge has involved the absolute rejection of authority, the cherishing of the keenest scepticism, the annihilation of the spirit of blind faith' (p.60).

'Science', of course, is not one thing: the innumerable branches of

science are subdividing daily into new specialist disciplines. But there is a relatively homogeneous scientific attitude, and if we are considering scientists qua scientists, as it were in the process of experimentation, then Huxley's words above express that attitude well. However, scientists are also people, and we shall shortly have to consider the implications of this. Though not quite at this point.

The aims of scientific education in school are primarily intended to foster a good scientific attitude. The Spens Report (Board of Education, 1938) listed three main aims for secondary school science:

- (1) It should give pupils some knowledge of the natural laws which operate in the universe and of their application. This is an appeal to wonder and to interest, as well as to utility.
- (2) As a complement to historical studies, it should reveal the influences of scientific thought and achievement in the evolution of our present-day civilisation and perhaps even more important, it should indicate its possibilities, for good and evil alike, in the future of the human race. The appeal here is to social interest and social utility.
- (3) It should give children an introduction into scientific methods of thought and investigation. This appeal is essentially one to the intellect and, in so far as it is achieved, Science takes the place of the mediaeval study of logic. (p.245)

These aims (even taking account of their concern with 'appeal') were largely conceived of in terms of teaching. The Plowden Report (DES, 1967), being designed later for the more 'progressive' primary schools, couches its aims for science education more in terms of the learner:

If children leave their primary schools with their natural curiosity not only unimpaired but sharpened, with experience of first-hand discovery in several different fields, with some idea of what questions to ask and how to find the answers, they will be well equipped to proceed with a scientific education. We believe that many secondary school teachers of science welcome this already and we hope that soon all of them will do so. (p.244)

We may doubt whether all secondary schools 'welcomed' these inquisitive budding young scientists with equal enthusiasm; but by the time of the Schools Council project Science 5-13 (1972) a similarly 'child-centred' approach was adopted, but this time coupled with clearly defined objectives based on the application of Benjamin Bloom's (1956) taxonomical principles. Learning stages were based on the Piagetian developmental pattern - from 'intuitional', through 'concrete

operational' to 'abstract' thinking; beginning with simple awareness and recognition of natural phenomena and simple changes, moving through elementary prediction, grouping and the recognition of subtler distinctions, to the capacity to formulate hypotheses and 'distinguish a logically sound proof from others less sound.' The project was concerned to elicit children's feelings and interests as well as their knowledge and skills. This concern with the children's interest is important since, despite the esteem in which science appears to be held, and the degree to which it permeates and governs our lives, the results of a number of researches enumerated by Butcher and Pont (1970) led to the conclusion that 'a science career is unattractive to the majority of young people' (p.158).

The Science/Arts dichotomy

Attempts to discover the reasons for this have led to some interesting speculations. It seems, from experiments by Roe (1953), Terman (1965), and Tyler (1964), for example, that there is a strong tendency for scientists to be oriented towards things and arts students to be people-oriented. Smithers, investigating student expectations from their future careers, found that 'when the values were classified as extrinsic (rewards for work, e.g. money) and intrinsic (relating to the performance of the work itself)...scientists were concerned with both rewards, while non-scientists were less concerned with extrinsic rewards and were more people-oriented' (quoted in Butcher and Pont, p.161). It was found for example, that among a variety of items on a questionnaire relating to career-choice, the item 'Good chance to earn money' was 'rated of high importance by 33 per cent of the arts/social science group and by 64 per cent of the applied scientists', and 'Opportunity to work with people rather than things' was 'rated by 60 per cent and 21 per cent of arts and science groups respectively' (ibid.). The tendency, from the evidence of such studies, seems to be towards materialism among the scientifically minded. There also seems to be a tendency for

scientists to be convergent rather than divergent thinkers. (This was the conclusion of Hudson (1966) in Contrary Imaginations, a study of arts and science students in relation to a divergence-convergence continuum.)

Convergers are defined as 'those who are substantially better at intelligence tests...than open-ended tests (Uses of objects, Meanings of words) and divergers are defined as the reverse of this'. As reported in Butcher and Pont (1970):

The central finding was that arts specialists were, on the whole, divergers and physical scientists convergers. Only about one in four divergers was likely to be doing physical science, and similarly about one in four convergers was likely to be found in subjects such as English literature, modern languages or history' (p.170)

Developing his study and moving on from cognition to personality characteristics, Hudson postulated that cognitive divergers would be 'more likely to have liberal and non-authoritarian views' than convergers.

Butcher and Pont record his findings as follows:

Using a test of 'controversial statements' he found this to ^{be} marginally true; three out of five 'authoritarian' people were convergers. He postulated a tension between the need to innovate and the established weight of knowledge, and suggested that convergers and divergers react differently to this tension. The former seek out those subjects with the greatest weight of authority, hoping for exactitude with the exclusion of doubt; divergers seek out ambiguity' (pp.171-172).

We must be careful to remember that statistical evidence of this kind gives us 'average' behavior and not the behavior of individuals; but even so the conjunction of the two findings indicated above suggests a tendency with important, and possibly disturbing, social and educational implications. If the scientifically minded tend to be oriented towards things (rather than people) and also tend to be convergent and authoritarian in outlook there would seem to be a danger in overdeveloping this tendency by an unbalanced, overspecialized curriculum. Some important experiments by the American researcher, Milgram (1963), have demonstrated the willingness of the average human being to inflict suffering on others under orders from 'authority' figures; this willingness might conceivably be exacerbated among subjects whose orientation was both above-averagely authoritarian and below-averagely interested in people.

Not unconnected perhaps is the scale of experimentation by scientists with living creatures other than human beings, which is beginning to be questioned. In United Kingdom psychology alone some 43,000 animals a year are subjected to experimentation often involving vivisection of a bizarre or inhumane nature. An article 'Brainwashing and Vivisection', reporting a survey conducted by a Working Party on Animal Experimentation set up in 1976 by the Psychological Society quotes the concern of

Dr Alice Heim:

She referred to the case-hardened attitudes that the behavioral approach induced in young students. She herself, she said, 'Had been brainwashed for some years into thinking that the endless maze-running of starved, parched or mutilated rats served some justifiable scientific purpose' The Observer, 4 March, 1979 (p.2)

The report of the Working Party suggests that 'repeated references to animal experiments "without comment" are likely to desensitise psychology students to the ethical issues at stake'. It is worth reminding ourselves of the danger of desensitisation in respect of people.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn (1963, 1971) and George Steiner (1969) both (though from different points of view) provide evidence of this in societies devoted to technological development - Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany; one making a religion of scientific materialism, the other struggling from economic chaos to moral chaos by means of accelerated technological advance under charismatic authoritarian leadership.

According to E F Schumacher (1974) the problem is wider than this, and has worldwide implications:

...the modern world has been shaped by technology (he writes). It tumbles from crisis to crisis - on all sides there are prophecies of disaster and indeed, visible signs of breakdown. If that which has been shaped by technology, and continues to be so shaped, looks sick, it might be wise to have a look at technology itself. If technology is felt to be becoming more and more inhuman, we might do well to consider whether it is possible to have something better - a technology with a human face. (p.122)

Schumacher sees the answer to desensitization in transformed economics; Victor White (1952), writing as a psychologist, sees it in a recognition of spiritual need and of the psychic demands of the human mind. Referring

to the Second World War, he writes:

What shocked and astounded us at Belsen and Buchenwald was less their shaming inhumanity, than their manifestation of stark, ruthless, primitive devilry. They were inexplicable merely in terms of cynical, utilitarian power-politics. There was no use, no reason, not even a bad reason, in keeping thousands of people just alive, when they could have been so easily slain or just left to die, merely for their torture and affliction. Could it be that gods and demons, heavens and hells, are ineradicable from the nooks and crannies of the human mind, and that if the human mind is deprived of its heaven above and its hell beneath, then it must make its heaven and corresponding hell on earth? (p.42)

If these apocalyptic voices sound a little shrill from the security of our studies and classrooms, it is worth recalling that Victor White's observations on the demoniac characteristics of the Second World War might equally have been applied to Vietnam or Uganda or to any of the one-hundred-and-thirty or so sites of war on this planet since 1945. Throughout this period 'Science' and technology have made their mark with a vigour unimaginable in former periods. They are themselves, of course, ethically neutral, but they magnify immeasurably the range and impact of the moral decisions of mankind.

Any study concerned with science, ethics and education ought to take some account of the implications of nuclear warfare and the arms race; in fact in this discussion of the relationship between science and authority it could be said that the H-Bomb has pride of place: it virtually symbolizes the enthronement of 'Science' in the vacuum left by the retreating gods. It is the all-powerful Answer hovering in the background of human disputes, combining the attributes of the primal Sol (but "Brighter than a Thousand Suns" as Robert Jungk put it), Jove, Mars and the God of Judgment. In lacking the attributes of Venus (or the Hindu 'Creator' or Christian 'love') it ignores the one potentially redeeming area of the displaced pantheon. It is scarcely surprising that many young people, while acknowledging perforce the self-evident power and authority of Science, reject the authority of the generation which has finally enthroned the new god, taking refuge from the powerful shadow that hangs over their lives and futures in hedonism or cynicism.

'Science' wrote Herbert Spencer in Education, 'is organized knowledge'; but its efficacy, we should add, depends upon organized humanity. Whether its organisation is to be achieved on authoritarian or autonomous principles is a question for society, but with strong implications for the curriculum.

Moral education

The area of curriculum most concerned with the development of autonomy is that of moral education. In this relatively new, but fast-growing field, John Wilson has played a prominent part as Director first of the Farmington Trust and then of the Warborough Trust Research Units. In A Teacher's Guide to Moral Education (1973) he points out that the first task of moral education is to learn to bring thought to bear in a region where feeling and fantasy alone so often predominate.

But to introduce a sane and sensible set of procedures for morality and religion is far more difficult. Even under the threat of global war and self-extinction, to say nothing of crime, delinquency, mental illness, anarchy and other such, people will still cling to their objects and simple pictures. The most we can hope for, short of very radical methods of changing human psychology, is that people will learn to recognise when they are doing this. (p.7)

He postulates four main 'moral components' as the basis of all effective moral learning:

1. Treating others as equals...: that is, giving the same weight to the wants and needs of other people as to one's own.
2. Awareness of one's own and other people's emotions.
3. Awareness of the 'hard' facts relevant to moral decisions.
4. Bringing the above to bear on particular situations, so as to decide and act in accordance with them. (p.28)

In the same publication Wilson makes the important distinction between authoritarianism (of which he is critical) and legitimized authority (which he regards as an essential prerequisite of healthy interaction in school or society). He also includes what is equally relevant to the present thesis, a substantial section on the contribution of literature to moral education, making the pertinent comment (in a discussion of William Golding's novel Lord of the Flies) that by concrete exposition 'the book, like all literature, shows us how things are' (p.116), a

point to be developed in chapters 7 and 11 of this thesis.

Subsequently, Wilson makes the important point, quoting Richard Peters, that in providing moral education for people, as in education generally, our concern should be 'To initiate them into various forms of understanding, "cognitive awareness" and knowledge: and to care for such understanding', and this must be clearly distinguished from 'training, indoctrinating, conditioning, forcing, browbeating, and so on' (p.14).

He continues:

It is an essential part of the notion of education that the pupil comes to care for understanding. In moral education especially, where the 'affective' or 'motivational' side is unusually important, we must not undervalue those non-cognitive processes which are essential for the acquisition of attitudes and dispositions. At the same time, we have to give the cognitive or conceptual side its due weight - a point sometimes missed by empirical workers, particularly in the behavioristic tradition of psychology. (Collier et al, 1974, p.14)

While I agree with this balance in principle, I am inclined to think that Wilson elsewhere, in fact, like many professional philosophers and logicians, takes an oversanguine view of the capacity of the average person for ratiocination. His exposition of the desuetude of religion and the redundancy of the term 'God' in Education in Religion and the Emotions (1971) for example, is as complex an exercise in logical gymnastics as was formerly indulged in by theologians establishing the validity of the term. Many people, recognizing the essentially private meaning of the term 'God' to each individual, will simply go on using it without reference to either theologians or philosophers. However, in justice to Wilson, it must be added that (in his Introduction to Moral Education, 1959) he recognizes that 'rationality itself is not the only good thing in life, and cannot be treated as a sacred cow' (p.162). Moreover, Wilson's belief in pursuing the enlargement of rationality in moral education (however short we may fall in our degree of success) is completely in line with a main contention of this thesis, which can indeed be expressed in his own words 'that we should help children and adolescents make up their own minds about religion, rather than forcibly condition

or indoctrinate them into one particular creed' (p.181). A point which I would wish to make in connection with any ideology or dogmatic system. Furthermore, Wilson recognizes the potential efficacy of 'psychological insights contained in...myths, stories, (and) parables' (p.181), which is the realm of literature, the element in the present thesis that is opposed to dogma.

The question of the contribution that literature can make to moral education is admirably posed by Gabriel Chanan (Collier et al, 1974). An important note of caution is sounded in Chanan's observation that, 'it seems unlikely that we could ever prove that literature necessarily has a moral effect, or if it does, that it has an effect predictable from its intrinsic qualities' (p.107). In any case, moreover, 'by no means all great literature and art is unequivocally humanitarian in tendency' (ibid.). Furthermore, since individual readers (who may testify to the moral value of literary study) 'are nevertheless aware of getting slightly different things out of the same works, just as we take away different impressions of the same people, it is virtually impossible to define the function or the moral influence of literature' (p.106). However, in the presenting of character and 'the explicit depicting of moral dilemmas' literature, wisely used, provides the raw materials for developing empathy and provoking meaningful discussion of ethical issues: 'any observation we may make about characters in literature can be regarded as at least sensitising us to the problems of understanding human beings' (p.110); and 'we are likely to find... that since literature contains the most sensitive explorations of moral problems ever recorded, some of our explicit moral discussions around works of literature may (even) be unequal to the subtleties of the illustration' (p.110). Ambiguity and scepticism are inherent in literature, contributing to its value in encouraging open-mindedness; 'We should recognise that doubt of the correctness of one's moral judgment is a sign of moral seriousness, though no guarantee of finding

eventual certainty' (p.112). Some of the implications of Chanan's discussion will be developed in chapter 11, but for the present purpose it must suffice to add his observation that the 'specificity of description common to good narrative is a particularly good reason for making sure that any programme of moral development does include an encounter with literature' (p.111).

The bibliography on Moral Education (1976) compiled for the Social Morality Council takes account of the importance of literature in moral education: 'For children as for adults, literature offers rich opportunities for deepening insight and exploring human situations' (p.35); and several valuable source books are recommended in its bibliography.

It is interesting to note the way in which 'stories' (the primal base material of literature) are often used in psychological studies of moral development and moral attitudes. For example, Wright (1971) quotes an experiment by Adorno which depended upon the use of a story presenting an 'eternal triangle' situation to elicit judgments on the behavior of various characters involved, in order to establish the 'authoritarian' or 'non-authoritarian' attitudes of the subjects (pp.188-189). Similarly, Kohlberg (see Ing, 1978) makes use of simple stories involving moral problems in order to study the responses of children and adolescents to the situation presented and so construct a typological scheme showing the developmental stages of moral thought (pp.90-94).

From the time of the 1944 Education Act up until the Newsom Report (1964) it seems to have been generally conceded, in official circles at least, that the compulsory legal requirement of religious education would by and large take care of the need for moral education in schools. With the advent of the Plowden Report in 1967 the first major rumbles of anxiety from officialdom are expressed: 'A special difficulty is raised by the third aim mentioned by our witnesses, that of the religious and moral development of the child...' (p.186). And again, 'The Council is divided in its views on religious education because of the personal

beliefs of its members. The fundamental difference between the theists and the non-theists is not one we can try to resolve. A minority of members believe that religious education should not figure in the curriculum at all. Other members believe that religious education and the Act of Worship should influence the entire curriculum and set the tone of living and learning for the whole school community. The views of the remaining members of the Council range between these two extremes' (p.203).

The Minority Report on religious education submitted by six members of the Plowden Report committee, including Professor A J Ayer, is particularly significant for this thesis in that a number of the views expressed equate very closely with those of Matthew Arnold in Literature and Dogma (see chapter 4 of this thesis). These views include the recognition that 'the Bible ought to be studied as literature (my italics), both on its own account and on account of the literature and art which it has inspired' (p.490); the affirmation 'that the moral element should predominate over the theological' and that 'examples given should not be exclusively Christian. They should be drawn also from the lives and teaching of other religious teachers, like Buddha, and of outstandingly good men from Socrates onwards' (p.492); that our ignorance of metaphysical matters should be acknowledged 'honestly and undogmatically' (ibid.); that moral identification with Christ is more likely to occur if Christ is represented 'as an exceptional human being, rather than as an incarnate deity'; and finally that 'even though it may be difficult, the attempt should surely be made to determine precisely what it is that we wish our children to learn of ethics in a society which is increasingly rejecting the sanction of supernatural revelation' (p.493). The one area where this Minority submission parts company significantly with Arnold's view is in doubting the value of linking religious and moral education at all. For Arnold, morality is practically the raison d'etre of Christianity. Arnold would heartily agree, however, with

the submission's objection to Christianity being used to 'enforce compliance with a moral code' or to employ as a sanction 'the motive of fear' - notions which were quite foreign to his understanding of Christianity. He would not at all have approved the Conclusion reached in the Minority Report: 'As we see it, the balance of argument strongly favours the conclusion that religious instruction is not a suitable subject to be taken in primary schools. We therefore wish to see legislation enacted by which it would cease to be an obligatory part of the curriculum' (p.492).

This view, however, has found increasing favour among educationalists. Lawton (1973), for example, affirms that 'it is generally agreed by educationalists, Christians and non-Christians alike, that not only are the present arrangements for religious education in schools unsatisfactory as a means of teaching about religion and Christianity, but they are even less satisfactory as a means of teaching moral education' (p.134). He goes further, adding that 'for a society which is non-Christian and non-religious to rely on religious doctrines as a basis for moral behavior is positively dangerous' (p.135). He concludes that the alternative is 'the introduction of moral education in schools' in its own right.

Before leaving the question of moral education it is worth mentioning the importance attached to the need for children to encounter a diversity of viewpoints. In a paper on Religious and Moral Education published by Howard Marratt (1965) 'for a group of Christians and Humanists' the point is made: 'Wherever possible the course should draw on teachers with a variety of beliefs and standpoints working in an integrated team, and all alike should feel free to express their own beliefs, as personal beliefs' (p.7). Again in Stenhouse (1975): 'In Britain this problem of value conflicts often expresses itself as ambivalence between desire for consensus and desire for diversity. If diversity is to have real meaning, it must imply diversity of values, yet there is habitual pressure towards consensus. In a decentralized

system it is presumably desirable to have value divergence within each school' (p.213).

To sum up this discussion of the state of moral education some words of Gordon and Lawton (1978) seem apposite:

The current debate on moral education in schools reflects the problems of a changing society. For example, the multi-cultural nature of the school community and the lack of value consensus preclude a 'correct' set of responses to problem situations. In the light of such changes, a redefinition of the working relationships between religious and moral education is being sought' (p.106).

Religious Education:

(i) confidence

A complete survey here of publications and developments in religious education over the last two or three decades would be both impractical and unhelpful. According to A Bibliographical Review (Hogbin, 1973) published by the Christian Education Movement: 'in the United Kingdom more has been written about Religious and Moral Education in the last dozen years since 1960 than in the preceding twenty', and the flood shows no signs of drying up as yet. For the present purpose items will be selected for the light they throw on developments in attitudes in religious education relating to 'literature' and to 'dogma', and to the relation of these to moral education and to current social changes in the direction of cultural pluralism and of the rejection of authority.

A year before the outbreak of the Second World War, and six years before the Education Act of 1944, the Spens Report (Board of Education, 1938) was optimistic in its assessment of the public temper in regard to the teaching of Scripture:

We believe that there is a wide and genuine recognition of the value and importance of religious instruction and the teaching of Scripture in schools, and that the time is favourable for a fresh consideration of the place that they should occupy in the education of boys and girls of secondary school age' (p.206).

It was felt that, while 'teachers may differ widely in their personal convictions', the main educational issues were 'no longer obscured by past controversy'. The shadow of the rise of Naziism in Europe was perhaps responsible for the concern expressed to raise issues 'relating

to the meaning of life and to human destiny which in the world outside the school are the subject of profound disagreement' (ibid.). The Bible was to be studied partly for its literary value - 'The English Bible is one of the glories of the literary heritage bequeathed to the English-speaking peoples (and)...for that reason there is much to be said in favour of the inclusion of portions of the Bible in the syllabus of English Literature'. However, 'it can neither be treated merely as a part of English Literature nor can it be merged in the general study of history...since it also is a classic book of Christianity, and forms the basis of the structure of Christian faith and worship'. It therefore has doctrinal value. Nevertheless in the Report's final justification of the use of the Bible in schools the emphasis is on an open-ended approach: 'No boy or girl can be counted as properly educated unless he or she has been made aware of the fact of the existence of a religious interpretation of life' (ibid.).

The Education Act of 1944 made the teaching of religious instruction the only compulsory subject on the curriculum and required each school to hold a daily act of worship - subject in both cases to a conscience clause allowing the right of withdrawal. The spirit of the Cowper-Temple Clause was also invoked in that religious instruction in state schools was not expected to include any 'religious catechisms or religious formulary which is distinctive of any particular denomination'. The curriculum was to promote all-round education, contributing 'towards the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community' - a community which was at that time not only fairly homogeneous in terms of avowed Christian belief, but also closely united in the closing stages of a profound idealistic struggle.

Religious Education

(ii) doubts and questionings

By the time of the Crowther Report (Ministry of Education, 1959), the ideological situation was less clear: 'The serious decline of the

religious attitude to and the explanation of life has left a vacuum' said the Report; 'That vacuum has yet to be satisfactorily filled and Europe still seeks to formulate its own distinctive ideas' (p.503).

The problem was to provide a 'liberal education in a technical age'.

'Art', 'letters', 'citizenship', 'sport', and 'religious instruction' are 'variously offered as correctives to the alleged "narrowness" of technical instruction' (ibid.). The Report was ambiguous as to which of these *was to predominate in the United Kingdom, but its general concern* 'correctives' was expressed in the following open-ended plea:

The teen-agers with whom we are concerned need, perhaps before all else, to find a faith to live by. They will not all find precisely the same faith and some will not find any. Education can and should play some part in their search. It can assure them that there is something to search for and it can show them where to look and what other men have found. (p.44)

The Newsom Report (1963) stressed the need for schools to be concerned with 'spiritual and moral development', but in the contemporary climate the teacher of religious instruction was put on his mettle: 'He must know his Bible and its teaching, he must have thought about the relation of religion, and religious knowledge, to other fields of human activity and ways of knowing' (para.169, pp.56-57). The last phrase is significant, acknowledging implicitly that there are different ways of knowing, and recognizing the epistemological problems involved in presenting a world view in which spiritual, moral and scientific understanding are to be harmonized. The problem is epitomized in the following words of a fourteen-year-old boy quoted in the Report:

I have many times thought about religion. I have gone to many Churches and gone to many meetings to find out the truth about God. I think there is a God but I do not think he his in heaven because men have studied science and found out the moon his far away it his cold and dead and the sun his burning and the stars are billions of years away and the sky is just space so where can God be. (para. 82, p.28)

No cut-and-dried answer is given to this problem but the teacher is adjured to be both 'adequately equipped with up-to-date scholarship' (p.57) and 'imagination' in coping with the real problems facing students, guiding them towards responsible living by 'developing conscience from the stage of taboo to the level of insight' (p.115).

If 'taboo' is taken as the correlative of 'dogma' this recommendation is open-ended and anti-dogmatic in essence.

While the Newsom Report was concerned with secondary school pupils 'of average and less than average' ability, a near-contemporary enquiry had been undertaken by Daines (1962) into 'the methods and effects of religious education in the sixth forms', students (at that time) generally of above average ability. In his conclusions Daines testified to a 'spiritual hunger' which was generally 'unsatisfied' by the current methods of religious education. There was no objection expressed by the pupils to the subject as such, but examples of bigotted teaching were resented. Students wanted 'deeper understanding' and a 'wider perspective'; their real and pressing personal problems were all too often ignored in favour of examinable 'religious knowledge'. Religious Instruction was 'still being conducted in far too many cases on the basis of the impartation of a body of knowledge rather than a sharing of religious experience' (p.24). The findings seemed to Daines to confirm the need for open-endedness recommended in the Crowther Report: 'The adolescent needs help to see where he stands, but it must be given with discretion and restraint. He does not want to be 'told', but he wants a guide, and a guide who will be honest in not overstating a case' (quoted in Daines, p.3).

Three other significant pieces of research of this period must be mentioned: the Sheffield Report (1961), and the work of Loukes (1961) and of Goldman (1964). The first of these researches, carried out by the University of Sheffield Institute of Education was concerned to establish the quality and success or otherwise of religious education in the secondary school. Systematic testing of 1,233 pupils in 15 schools resulted in the conclusion that despite the provisions of the 1944 Education Act 'there is something wrong with the religious education given in schools' (p.45). Although the majority of pupils in the investigation thought school prayers important, and over half suggested that

their religious education lessons held some value for them in their future, the tests showed that these young people 'remained ignorant of simple religious facts': 'One significant result of the survey was to supply evidence that for many children there was little correlation between the factual knowledge gained through religious education and a faith by which to live' (p.43). It is certainly surprising that '27 children did not know why we keep Christmas Day', but the fact that 'nearly one-quarter of all the pupils - 316 out of 1,233 - were unable to assign a meaning to Ascension Day' (p.36) does not seem to me to be particularly alarming; nor the fact that nearly three-quarters were ignorant of 'why we celebrate Whitsuntide'. Both these items relate to the dogmatic realm of Christianity; both are outside the life of Jesus and his teaching; and both are the kind of miraculous events (at least in the way they are usually taught) which seem incredible to a mind healthily adjusted to a twentieth-century world view. The report rightly recommends 'keen study with an open and inquiring mind', but in seeking for pupils a grasp of 'the essentials of a faith the more firmly held because reason and intellect have had a full share in its development' (p.53), it seems to be moving from open-mindedness to proselytising.

This danger is avoided by Harold Loukes, whose study of Teenage Religion seems to be based on other premises:

The defence of Christian education must be made to rest on the same open ground as that of all our education: it must seek to perform some task which would be accepted as healthy, contributing to wholeness of the personality, and would not be judged by the conscientious agnostic to be limiting or hampering. (p.96)

'Faith' for Loukes (as for Dean Inge) is 'the resolution to stand or fall by the noblest hypothesis' not trying to believe 'what you know isn't true'. 'The "open" defence of the presentation of the Christian world view is not that it is "true" (which merely means that Christians say it is true, and is therefore in an open society tautological) but that it is "larger" than any other view' (p.96). And this is for the pupils

to judge. The 'conscientious agnostic' has every right to say that young children 'should not be indoctrinated in such a way as to reduce their powers of judgment in the years to come' (p.97). Loukes therefore recommends a 'child centred' approach, starting with the actual problems of the pupils in relation to authority, personal responsibility, sex and friendship, and questions of the ultimate meaning of life; and exploring these against a Christian frame of reference elements of which the pupils are free to accept or reject at will.

Goldman's research - an account of which first appeared in cyclo-styled form (Goldman, 1962) - was based primarily on the Piagetian theory of conceptual development among children. It was also informed by a recognition (akin to that of Ian Ramsey, 1963) that the language of the Bible is essentially poetical or metaphorical, rather than literal - of a kind which 'discloses' its meaning to the sensitive and mature mind. 'In the last resort religion is a mystery and speaks of matters and experiences which are incommunicable', he writes, 'Nevertheless the teacher's major task is to communicate truths on an intellectual plane' (p.3). Is there such a thing, he asks, as 'religious readiness' and 'Can...a syllabus be devised which is suitable to patterns of intellectual development' (ibid.). A main problem is that 'religious precepts and concepts are not based upon direct sensory data, but are formed from other perceptions and conceptions of experience' (p.4). How can such second order concepts be explored without the process degenerating into mere dogmatic verbalism? Goldman's conclusion, based on close study of children's responses to religious stories and pictures, is that this is largely a matter of presenting material in a correct conceptual sequence, postponing more abstract concepts until mid-adolescence, or at least until the attainment of an appropriate mental and emotional age. Otherwise concepts become fixed at a crude, concretistic, anthropomorphic level, or remain permanently contaminated by a confused mixture of magical and miraculous elements (p.22). 'Most pupils until mid-secondary

schools tend to think only in terms of verbal or historical truth, and only later, if at all, appear to recognize parabolic-poetic or spiritual truth as valid' (p.28). Since this is the kind of truth in which the Bible abounds, 'our limited findings lend support to the view that "the Bible is not a children's book"' (p.49). At least, children should be 'weaned towards a more critical view of the Bible' (p.51); they should also be helped to reconcile their theological framework with science, and guided away from the view of the Bible as somehow 'isolated in time' - a special 'holy place, with holy people at a holy period of history' - irrelevant to the modern world. An important by-product of Goldman's research which has often been overlooked is his subtly-induced questioning of the 'maturity' of religious ideas held by many adults. On the scale mapped out by Goldman and his colleagues the thinking of a large number of adults would be classified as 'regressive'. His research was therefore a major challenge to fixed and rigid dogmatic teaching and a reminder of the essentially literary and poetic nature of scriptural material. At the same time his influence was to discourage the direct use of biblical material until the upper junior and the secondary stages of learning.

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(iii) imagination versus dogma

From a somewhat different psychological position, R S Lee (1965) tended to advocate the use of biblical stories with young children, but not, he was careful to stress, in any moralistic or doctrinally-oriented way:

In selecting the stories, it is a mistake to choose them according to what adults think will be 'good' for the children, that is, edifying and leading to a nice moral lesson, or some nice religious sentiment, such as being kind. Children may be left to develop their own judgments, and that will come gradually. (p.144)

Children, he seems to imply (I think correctly), have an intuitive sense of 'story' - when they want to distinguish between fact and fiction they ask 'Is it true?'. Lee opposes the dogmatic teaching of those who implicitly or explicitly take the attitude that religion is something that has to be imposed or grafted upon the growing personality'

(p183). Maturity can only be attained, moreover, in an atmosphere of 'spiritual freedom, made possible by the support and encouragement of a society of free persons' who trust the adolescent, and whom he in turn can trust. (p.187)

Hubery (1965), in Teaching the Christian Faith Today, stresses the importance of bringing religious education up-to-date. Matthew Arnold would have appreciated the subtitle of his book: 'from experience to experience through experience'. Like Goldman, Hubery wants to repair the rift between scientific and religious thought.

Quite apart from recent research it is necessary to remind ourselves that the unhappy controversies between scientists and Bible scholars of the past, has left a legacy of general mistrust in Bible truth. It is popularly regarded as antiquated and unreliable, full of childish stories unrelated to life, and in any case even when objectively true concerned only with simple folk belonging to a pastoral community and environment totally different from our own. (p 46)

The literary-poetic nature of Jesus's teaching is stressed by Hubery. In his parables, 'we find Jesus is using almost without exception the method of imagined experience. Pictures are conjured up in vivid language which stirs the imagination, and those who heard him could not fail to be caught up in the experiences of life as they recognised the characters and situations described' (p88). Again, 'scholars have been quick to point out that Jesus uses the poetic forms of language most likely to appeal to those who were able to hear him' (p.89). This teaching through the imagination is itself an open-ended approach encouraging questioning and challenging dogma. Hubery looks to this for support: 'the teaching methods of Jesus confirm what I have tried to say about the dangers of indoctrination and the need for mature teachers who do not violate the integrity of individual personality' (p.90)

Cox (1967)*, investigating 2,276 second-year sixth form pupils in English grammar schools, found that while 'Bible teaching was more

*Cox summarizes his own research in his chapter on 'Religious Education' (pp.107-119) in Butcher and Pont (1970). Asterisked page references above are to his summary; non-asterisked references to the original report.

appreciated in the lower forms...discussion of modern social, moral, and religious problems was preferred in the sixth form' (p.115*). On the whole, the subjects favoured compulsory religious instruction in principle while querying its quality in practice. In particular 'there was considerable resentment of teaching that seemed over-dogmatic or moralizing, and a demand for more pupil involvement and for less Bible teaching in favour of learning of other religions' (ibid*). Cox distinguishes two kinds of thinking between which students tend to vacillate: 'empirical' (broadly speaking, factual) thinking and 'teleological' thinking (concerned with value judgments). 'These two modes of thinking, however, do not have equal esteem in their minds' (p.175). Consequently:

Their experience of the logico-scientific view of the world seemed to be causing them to reject the traditional forms of Christian beliefs; while retaining the beliefs themselves in an amorphous form; and this situation precluded both accurate thinking and the ability to relate religious beliefs to the world of experience. (p.111*)

Asked about their 'beliefs about God, the divinity of Jesus, life after death, and the inspiration of the Bible, the results showed a fairly high incidence of belief in all these doctrines, but widespread uncertainty of their precise nature' (ibid.). I find this puzzling. To be accurate about 'the precise nature' of 'life after death' (which can for mortals be at most a 'noble hypothesis') or about 'God' or 'the inspiration of the Bible', for that matter, would be asking a lot of an octogenarian theologian let alone a school student. Surely if 'precise' responses are wanted they could only come in the form of dogma (which the report rejects); and 'amorphous' forms of answer would seem more intellectually honest in the face of the unknowable; and not something which a genuine open-ended search should be ashamed of. Cox recognizes elsewhere the importance of understanding the imaginative and symbolic, non-literal nature of religious expression, and expresses anxiety that 'many young people are abandoning the metaphors by which theological thought has expressed itself in the past, and are left without any of the mental

tools that make a religious explanation of life coherent and vivid' (p.176). It may well be, however, that new metaphors are needed to make sense of the twentieth century.

Religious Education

(iv) restatement - openness and experience v. authoritarianism

A Schools Council project, An Approach Through Religious Education (1969), gives a cautious welcome to attempts to restate Christianity 'in terms that are intelligible to modern thinking': 'The utterances of the New Theology, although at their worst unhelpfully opaque, at their best invite a fruitful penetration through the language of ecclesiastical theology to a rediscovery of New Testament experience and insight' (p.7). This project, seeking a measure of reconciliation between Old and New Theology and between Christians and Secular Humanists, adopts an open-minded model of religious education which goes beyond the reproduction of time-sanctioned metaphors:

To be religiously educated is to have grown in trust and love, to have turned outwards in compassion, to have discovered an inner strength that can somehow stand under attack, to have found life meaningful and authentic, to have said 'Yes' to life in its being and hope.' (p.12)

An examination of the nature of 'belief' is encouraged by a five-part scheme of categorization moving from sense-verification through the evidence of 'experts' to belief by persuasion. An understanding of the nature of belief and of authority, it is proposed, will give pupils more security than the 'kind of inoculatory propaganda' that has often been designed by various orthodoxies for this purpose:

Organized beliefs, expressed in the great religions, have always been examined by the few and accepted on authority by the many. But now there is among the few a conflict of belief of such a radical nature that the many have no obvious authority to follow. But when we talk of 'man coming of age', or, less radically, of universal education, we express a hope that everybody will develop such intellectual autonomy as will enable him at least to choose his authorities, to see for himself something of what they are talking about, and develop some insight into the way beliefs work in human life. There is, it must be admitted, no ground for certainty that this can be done; but equally no grounds for believing that a return to authority is possible, even if it is thought desirable...The sense of the urgency of this comes not only from religious believers but from humanists and concerned agnostics. What we aim at here is not the acceptance of a particular orthodoxy but the readiness to examine arguments and persuasions on some rationally justifiable grounds, and the development of a certain personal coherence of belief which will

enable our pupils to stand up as men and women under the propaganda to which they will be exposed. (p.50)

Understood this way religious education 'is a process whereby ultimate questions are kept open, not a process of trying to close them' (p.32).

On the question of the relation between moral education and religious education this Schools Council report suggests that they should not be regarded as interdependent: 'Whatever view is held on this issue, it must be agreed that it is unwise to tie ethical propositions too closely to religious propositions, lest a later rejection of religion may carry with it a rejection of moral responsibility' (p11).

The research conducted by Colin Alves (1968) under the auspices of the British Council of Churches and financed by the Gulbenkian Foundation is a major document on religion and the secondary school. It is easier to admire its thoroughness and integrity than to summarize its implications even for the limited purposes of this thesis. Its 'openness' of approach is based on the recognition that many of our generation 'are beginning to discover the true cross-fertilization of "religious" and "secular" study' (p.160). Religious education must therefore 'be set firmly within the realm of present-day scientific studies': Christian education, instead of being separated from the sciences, must somehow be refreshed and reformulated within their context. Especially is this the case with the biological and psychological sciences' (p.154). It must start from the felt experience of pupils since 'meaning always begins to take shape or, to put it another way, gains its initial impetus out of the experiences of the immediate present, or out of the phenomena which are immediately apprehensible. In other words we cannot begin with events of a remote past and expect to find meaning in them by themselves' (p.158). Moreover, while 'example' is obviously an important element in the acquisition of values, we 'should try to secure that decisions are made in as much of the light of reason as possible' (p.15). Thus 'science', 'experience' and 'reason' are

stressed; and 'a vague belief in a supernatural "something" which is little better than superstition' (p.166) is rejected. 'Religious education...is justified: not because of any supernatural moral sanction with which our pupils must be confronted, but because of the need to establish a perspective on life, in the light of which one can face the moral perplexities and challenges of living' (p.150).

The report regrets that the evidence from the sample suggested a tendency for 'pro-Christian attitudes and authoritarian judgments' to be 'found in association with each other' among (some) school leavers (p.121); This was true of girls in particular (though they were also 'more discriminating') (p.139-140). Although it was found that discussion techniques were sometimes associated with lower test scores, the report favoured such an approach: 'One must surely ask, what do we want - orthodoxy at all costs, or an honest expression and examination of basic community attitudes' (p.209). An open-ended approach should reduce the need for the exercise of the 'rights of withdrawal' from religious education; but these rights must be maintained to protect the individual conscience (p.188). However, the report adds an interesting observation, which is usually overlooked, in this respect:

It seems strange that a Marxist has the right to withdraw his children from lessons about the life of Jesus or the work of the Christian Church, whereas a Christian parent has no right (short of changing schools) of withdrawing his children from history lessons which are subtly (or overtly) tinged with Marxist dogma, or from literature lessons which 'commend' to the children standards and values that are far from Christian.' (p.187)

This is raised simply to point out an anomaly; not with a view to increasingly the incidence of 'withdrawals', but to encourage the reduction of the need for these by improving the quality of openness in discussion in all areas of the curriculum.

In its pursuit of openness the report sheds no tears over 'the undermining of old certainties' (p.159) or 'the breakdown of traditional conventions and inhibitions' (ibid.), since these find a parallel in the spiritual revolution experienced by the early church:

And in the sphere of religion itself many of our generation have found this same liberating experience through the explosive effects which the temper of radical questioning has produced. For them the very fact that no theological statements and claims can any longer be regarded as immune from questioning has transformed the whole business from the acceptance - or more probably the rejection - of 'dead ideas' into a living experience of enquiry and discovery. (p.160)

Many of the Agreed Syllabuses, it is felt, are out-of-date and out-of-touch; and so is a good deal of religious education teaching: 'Bad Bible-based teaching, it can be argued, is worse than no teaching at all' (p.167), and 'When to incompetence we add the dreary repetitiveness that has characterised much Bible-based teaching we have an effective weapon for the destruction of a child's emergent faith' (ibid.). Untrained or over-theologically trained teachers seem to come off less well than those professionally trained in religious education. On balance 'radical' is preferred to 'traditional' teaching, but a 'diversity of approach' has much to recommend it: 'So long as the two schools of thought recognize each other's integrity, and make it plain in their teaching that they do so, the effect of diversity on the mental and spiritual growth of their pupils can mean gain rather than loss' (p.164). Finally, on the question of openness the report opposes dogmatic teaching by an unequivocal affirmation of intent:

We are aware that a good many teachers and older pupils regard religious education with some suspicion and contempt as a kind of admittedly ineffective brain-washing. Our desire is to make it at once more effective and less suspect. This involves first of all an 'open' approach in the classroom much as pupils expect in other subjects. By this we mean that pupils should not feel inhibited from expressing any opinions they may honestly hold or asking any questions which seem to them important. We mean, too, that teachers must be seen to address themselves scrupulously to the whole of the evidence, following where the arguments leads. Success also involves such an integration with the teaching of other subjects as to make cross-reference easy and effective. (p.18)

The report quotes evidence of considerable parental support for religious education (pp.150-151) and found evidence in the majority of the pupils sampled of 'fairly favourable' attitudes (p.59) to the subject, although within it 'the image of the Church' it was found, 'is considerably tarnished, far more so than the image of Jesus' (p.55).

The Alves report says little about non-biblical literature except to recommend the use, in assemblies for example, of material culled 'from the masters of the spiritual life, from great literature, biography, poetry, and music' bringing 'fresh insights and incentives' (p.197), and to suggest that 'the study of history and literature raises a number of...questions. What are the influences which shape the direction of human advance? Is it possible to discern the working of something like a law of moral cause and effect?' etc. (p.161). The metaphorical nature of much religious discourse is also recognized, since the report applauds the shift in theological metaphor from a static to a dynamic emphasis. A brief recognition of the importance of catering for 'the presence among our fellow citizens of an increasing number of followers of other faiths' (p.15) is expressed, but the means of meeting this challenge (in terms of literature, etcetera) is not discussed, except in terms of the general openness advocated and the acknowledgement of the reciprocal value of shared insights.

Two years after the Alves Report came a remarkable document from the Methodist Conference Commission on Education: Christian Commitment in Education (1970). A main feature of this report is an examination of the nature of 'authority' which postulates six basic kinds of authority:

- (1) Authority of function (e.g. by appointment or election to a clearly defined role);
- (2) authority of skill (which is relevant to that skill or knowledge alone);
- (3) authority of experience or understanding (e.g. of coping with certain kinds of situations or predicaments);
- (4) authority of personal conviction or commitment (where willingness to suffer for the conviction 'carries within itself its own authority');
- (5) authority of inwardness (of evident integrity and compatibility between words and actions);
- and (6) authority of vulnerability or openness (where the defences of esoteric or physical remoteness are abandoned in favour of an open, egalitarian search for truth) (pp43-45).

In discussing the link between authority and power, 'coercive' and 'remunerative' power are relegated ^{to} a lower status than 'normative' power which is based on an 'identity of values and attitudes between those who wield the power and those under it; it is linked with "moral" involvement' (p.50). The lack of 'consensus opinion' in modern society makes clear-cut judgments of 'good' and 'bad' difficult, and the adoption of 'procedural neutrality' in discussion may sometimes help to allow issues to come into focus naturally. However,

What we need to recognise is that open-ended conditions of debate (in which the tutor can exercise no pressure open or covert, and into which it is desirable that he should introduce "some element of satire or irony...to prick any incipient self-inflation") offer the best hope of future moral growth in a society without agreed values. (p51)

This approach harmonizes in some respects with that of Arnold (see chapter 6). On the question of student protest in higher education the report urges more 'democratisation' and recognized the legitimacy of certain of the issues, particularly issues of conscience, raised by students. In such cases:

Far from being either impatient or pharisaic about this, the Church must not even merely watch it sympathetically - she must identify herself with the impulses leading to such ferment, throw in her efforts towards the righting of wrong, and add her own endeavours to curb those diseases which are deep in our present culture. (p.54)

The report finds 'a good deal of common ground...between Humanists and Christians'; recognizes the importance of acknowledging the integrity of other faiths; and looks for a wider range of reference and the sensitive use of 'dance, poetry, drama (and) the visual arts' (p.79). Suitable parts of the Koran and William Golding's novel Lord of the Flies are specifically mentioned in this respect. All in all this Methodist report adopts a positive and dynamic stance:

Normative influence depends, in our contemporary situation, not so much on the existence of a consensus of opinion about values, ideals and objectives, as upon what values are communicated by the energy and methods by which the co-operative search for a consensus, both among staff and students, is pursued. (p.51)

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(v) cautious retrenchment

Publication of the Methodist report in 1970 coincided with that of

the Church of England Board of Education and the National Society (1970) entitled The Fourth R, a report of the Commission on religious education under the chairmanship of Dr Ian Ramsey, Bishop of Durham. If Methodism is traditionally associated with dissent and the Church of England with the establishment these two reports to some extent reflect this distinction of outlook. The sheer weight of the Church of England Commission's report suggests stability compared with the slighter volume of the Methodists. But despite the weight there are signs of movement in its pages: 'the term "religious instruction" should be replaced forthwith by the term "religious education"' (p.277); 'the statutory provisions relating to religious instruction and school worship in the 1944 Education Act should not be continued in their present form in any forthcoming legislation' (ibid.); 'the existing machinery for the drawing up and adoption of an Agreed Syllabus by an L.E.A. should be abandoned' (p.278); 'the religious education of immigrant children raises a wide variety of complex issues...(and) we recommend that this problem should be approached with care and sensitivity and decisions taken in the light of the particular needs of local areas' (p.279); and 'We recognize the educational value of the discussion of moral questions by members of staff who hold different viewpoints and expound them with concern for responsible moral decision' (p.280). The genuine advances towards openness made here are somewhat muted by cautious safeguards built in to the proposals. The Commission would prefer a modified and broadened version of the 1944 wording of the Act, laying down that 'all pupils in county and voluntary schools shall be provided, according to their ages, abilities and aptitudes, with education in the arts and sciences, in religion and morals, and in physical and practical skills' (p.276) - a sort of precursor of the concept of a 'core curriculum', with religious education placed on equal terms with other subject areas and so released from embarrassing uniqueness as the one compulsory subject of the curriculum. In place of the Agreed Syllabuses the Commission would favour the regular

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publication of up-to-date 'books, pamphlets and other advisory material... under the auspices of the D.E.S. and the Schools Council' (p.278), local education authorities simply producing and regularly revising, a handbook of suggestions for teachers in their area.

Whereas the Schools Council Report referred to above (pp.67-68) feared the interdependence of religious and moral education, The fourth R believes that they could not, nor should not, 'proceed entirely independently of one another' (p.85). However, it favours 'openness' in both religious and moral education, defined as "not being doctrinaire, encouraging people to think for themselves, being ready to consider arguments against one's own position" (p.80), adding that 'As such it is compatible with having and communicating a definite position which one is prepared to defend' (ibid.). The report believes that, taught in these terms, Christianity can provide a support for moral education because reason alone, it believes, is an inadequate stay for most of us - pupils and teachers alike - and "We shall need in practice, and perhaps also in theory, some conception of what a good man is like' (p.79). However, it is not the task of teachers in county schools 'to press for any conversion' into 'a particular faith or belief system', although they have a duty to discourage 'a shallow and unreflective attitude to life' (p.107). The aim of religious education is expressed by the Commission in terms of cautious openness, as follows:

The aim of religious education should be to explore the place and significance of religion in human life and so to make a distinctive contribution to each pupil's search for a faith by which to live. To achieve this aim, the teacher will seek to introduce most pupils to that biblical, historical, and theological knowledge which forms the basis of the Christian faith. This will be done with careful reference to the ages, interests, and degrees of comprehension of the pupils. The teacher will also seek to show his pupils the insights provided by Christian faith and experience into a wide range of personal, social, and ethical problems. Moreover, he will seek to discuss with his pupils the various answers and approaches provided by this faith to those basic questions of life and existence which perplex all thoughtful men. Where appropriate, he will also study other religions and belief systems. The teacher is thus seeking rather to initiate his pupils into knowledge which he encourages them to explore and appreciate, than into a system of belief which he requires them to accept. (p.103)

Religious Education

(v) radical review-importance of feeling, imagination and symbolic language

A rather broader view is taken by the Department of Education and Science (1971) a year later in Prospects and Problems for Religious

Education:

Our society is a multicultural, multiracial one, and the curriculum should reflect a sympathetic understanding of the different cultures and races that now make up our society. We also live in a complex interdependent world, and many of our problems in Britain require international solutions (para. 10.11)

It is not only schools in multicultural areas that need to take account of other faults and other world-views:

the fact that children are growing up in a world which is steadily becoming smaller and more interdependent means that religious education should be set against a cosmic and not just a British background. This means, for instance, that at appropriate stages, there should be teaching about other religions as well as about Christianity, even apart from the presence of representatives of these religions in school. (p57)

The religious education clause of the 1944 Education Act is regarded as an 'authoritarian imposition...out of place in the modern education scene' (p.56) where 'in some colleges of education 90% of students opt out of religious education curriculum courses by the end' (p.34).

Paradoxically, however, the evidence has shown that 'most parents seem to want some form of religious education for their children' (p.5).

What is needed, therefore, is 'to show young people that a religious faith is not incompatible with scientific theory and with the world as they see it' (ibid. p. 35) and also to help them 'to gain a sense of wonder and of the numinous' (p.34) - which the report regards as an important part of religious education. Also important is the education of the emotions - 'too many teachers appear to be afraid of the very word "emotion"' (p.11).

Children need above all to find an identity for themselves, to feel that they matter and to establish relationships with others, which they cannot do without some measure of understanding of person relationships.

Role plays, literature, history and sensitivity to the life and teaching of Jesus Christ all contribute valuably towards this. (p.11).

Religious education therefore has a part to play in emotional education.

It can also contribute valuably to moral education since 'what appears to be missing from much secular thought is the element of idealism which is needed as an inspiration and as a touchstone. Compassion can hardly be taught unless we have a compassionate ideal', (p.10). This, as will be seen, is one of the key ideas of Arnold's thesis. The D.E.S. paper is also in tune with Arnold's approach to religious language:

We have hardly begun to understand the problems of religious language or the ways in which adolescents can be helped to slough off some of their immature religious concepts, replace them with more sophisticated ideas, and relate them to their scientific experience. (p.26)

These two issues, 'imagination' and 'an understanding of religious language' have come more to the fore in recent thinking about religious education, being reflected for example in the Birmingham syllabus and the Cheshire syllabus of religious education. They are the subject of a recent slim but significant pamphlet published by the British Council of Churches: The Place of Imagination in Religious Education by John Prickett (1978). The author makes a plea for the development of a 'disciplined imagination' (p.3). Imagination, he affirms, is needed not only to apprehend one's own religion or world-view but to view the religions of others with sympathetic understanding:

If religious communities, previously somewhat isolated from each other, are now being brought into a closer contact in pluralistic societies throughout the world, certain qualities are required of religious people if they are to live together peacefully...They have to do with awareness of and respect for the beliefs and social practices of others, with an openness of mind which, though not uncritical, is ready to learn from others and to welcome the new insights which learning brings, and with a readiness to welcome change and growth in spite of the pain which inevitably accompanies them. (p.7)

Imagination is the key to flexibility: 'The child who is being taught in such a way as to imply that there is only one viewpoint from which the truth can be seen is certainly not being prepared to live creatively in a pluralistic society' (p.7); and to moral insight: 'Every ethical problem is a challenge to the imagination' (p.13). It is also the key

to motivation: '("Men are moved to act", says John Coulson, "not by notions but by what seizes their imagination")' (ibid.). A conceptual framework is necessary to the study of religion, but it is not enough:

What is needed is not so much the somewhat sterile approach of analytic philosophy or epistemology (though these have their own disciplinary value), as the stimulation of a disciplined religious imagination from which there may emerge a cosmology enabling pupils to find meaning in their life. (p.12)

Prickett sees literature, and stories generally, as important in developing imagination. A significant change in the Birmingham syllabus is approved: 'in the past attention was concentrated on doctrine whereas now history, mythology, ethics, liturgy, inner experience, artistic and social expression are all included' (p.2). Similarly in the Cheshire syllabus: 'There is a far greater emphasis at all levels on the significance of religious language, especially in myths, legends, allegories, poems, metaphors in prose and poetry; (and) on the importance of symbolism in religion and on the use of various art forms in the expression of religious feelings and insights' (p.5). The author replies to those who would reject the use of stories:

I have sometimes heard those whose approach is mainly intellectual criticise the use of primitive stories (sometimes called myth) at an early age on the grounds that it is important that children should not learn at an early age what they will later have to unlearn. Such an arid, literalist view of such stories reveals precisely that lack of imagination which inhibits religious understanding. I should rather criticise the assumption that stories are only food for infants and suggest that we need a much wider use of them at all stages not least among adults. (p.4)

The capacity for critical evaluation is important, but total 'objectivity' is impossible, in Prickett's view, and undesirable in situations where empathy is more appropriate; and similarly 'procedural neutrality' (as distinct from 'a certain reticence') in discussion can lead to indoctrination through 'unconscious bias' whereas the expression of 'a viewpoint adopted consciously' may be less insidious and more natural. Once again Bishop Ian Ramsey is quoted, in support of a symbolic, literary understanding of theological matters:

The basic content is the vision, about which, in our stammering human way, we attempt to speak, and even to reason. All such efforts to articulate a vision partake of the nature of poetry...and imagination

is 'that quality of mind which enables us to partake of the symbolic method of poetry and of that greatest of all poetry -- the Scriptures.' (p.11)

All this, as will be seen (see chapter 4) was prefigured by Matthew Arnold a century ago; and the following words of Prickett's could virtually have been Arnold's: 'It goes without saying that the word "poetic" is used with the implication of heightening rather than diminishing the significance of what such language conveys. It is the literalist who diminishes' (p.12).

MORAL EDUCATION: DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE SPHERE OF ENGLISH TEACHING

Now what I want is Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else, and root out everything else. You can only form the minds of reasoning animals upon facts: Nothing else will ever be of any service to them...Stick to Facts, Sir!

Thomas Gradgrind, in
Charles Dickens' Hard Times, (1854)

Changes are taking place which, we think, are paving the way for further modification of the older conception of school subjects and school methods, and for the introduction of English Literature as a really vital part of the curriculum.

The Newbolt Report: The Teaching of English
in England (1921)

Idealism: the Newbolt Report

Developments in moral education (strictly so called) and in religious education have been considered; it now remains to examine what claims have been made within the field of English teaching as to the ethical contribution that can be made by the study of literature. The Newbolt Report (1921) occupies a midway position between Arnold's Literature and Dogma and the present time. It is necessary to quote from this document at some length because it is a significant statement of principles relevant to the present theme, but its effectiveness in terms of classroom implementation must be judged against the stringent financial circumstances prevailing at the time of its appearance, coming as it did between the Cabinet decision of 8th December 1920 to 'reduce the money spent on the education system' and the notorious 'Geddes Axe' of 1922 implementing the education cuts demanded (Bernbaum, 1967).

The terms of reference of the Newbolt Report were:

To inquire into the position held by English (Language and Literature) in the educational system of England, and to advise how its study may best be promoted in schools of all types, including Continuing Schools, and in Universities and other Institutions of Higher Education, regard being had to -

- (1) the requirements of a liberal education;
- (2) the needs of business, the professions, and public services, and
- (3) the relation of English to other studies. (p.1.)

One of the functions of the Newbolt Report was to justify the teaching

of English in place of 'the grand old fortifying classical curriculum'. Another was to present English literature as 'a source of delight' as well as 'an equipment for the understanding of life' (p.19). The high estimation afforded to literature by the report accords well with Matthew Arnold's ideas on the subject. For example '...no personality can be complete, can see life steadily and see it whole, without that unifying influence, that purifying of the emotions, which art and literature can alone bestow' (p.257). And Matthew Arnold is quoted directly a number of times in the Report, for example on the value of poetry:

Good poetry...does undoubtedly tend to form the soul and character; it tends to beget a love of beauty and of truth in alliance together, it suggests, however indirectly, high and noble principles of action, and it inspires the emotion so helpful in making principles operative. Hence its extreme importance to all of us; but in our elementary schools its importance seems to me to be at present quite extraordinary...' (p.49)

Of literature in general the Newbolt Report holds a similarly high opinion.

It is 'the direct and lasting communication of experience of man to men'; it must 'never be thought of as an ornament...a mere pastime or...a mental exercise remote from ordinary life' (p.9):

The sphere of morals in school life is limited by practical considerations with which we cannot here deal, but it is evident that if science and literature can be ably and enthusiastically taught, the child's natural love of goodness will be strongly encouraged and great progress may be made in the strengthening of the will. The vast importance to a nation of moral training would alone make it imperative that education shall be regarded as experience and shall be kept in the closest contact with life and personal relations. (p.9)

It is also recognized, however, that 'literature is written primarily for enjoyment, and unless it be welcomed with that initial enjoyment its influence will be sterile' (p.149). Given this pleasurable interaction we learn unconsciously from literature: 'few influences in life are so subtle or so powerful as the invisible power of literature - what may be called the undertones of the printed voice' (p.337). However, 'it is very generally recognized that reading may be harmful as well as beneficial - that while good literature may be good for the young, bad literature may have a "demoralising" effect' (p.335). On the whole the Report adopts a bold response to this danger in line with the biblical

exhortation 'prove all things, hold fast that which is good':

Prohibition...is both futile and undesirable: but it does not follow that there is no remedy against the debilitating effect of vulgarity in print. Mental, like physical, contagion is best avoided by maintaining a vigorous health. (p.338)

Given a healthy diet of worthwhile literature, 'the fear that the children of to-day are being demoralised or exposed to evil suggestion by the penny stories and penny magazines which they devour in such large quantities' (p.339) can be rejected. Good literature can provide both preventative and curative medicine for the mind: '...poets, philosophers, and historians have the power of revealing new values, relations of thought, feeling, and act, by which the full and superficial sight of the multitude is illuminated and helped to penetrate in the direction of reality' (p.17). A firmer grasp of reality brings with it a measure of release from the hold of artificial rigidities - 'freedom from tradition...intolerance of vested interests and...contempt for distinction based on birth rather than on worth' (p.17):

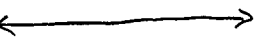
Among the best things which education can give are certainly freedom and independence of thought, a wide outlook on life, and a strong sense of the difference between convention and reality...Literature, which is untrammelled, as well as wider and more penetrating, will give them to the children of this country. (p.17)

The Newbolt Report regards the liberating effect of literature not as revolutionary and divisive but as uniting in its effect, contributing to a sense of shared common values in society: 'a feeling for our own native language would be a bond of union between classes, and would beget the right kind of national pride. Even more certainly should pride and joy in the national literature serve as a bond' (p.22). Literature shows that 'through all social differences human nature and its strongest affections are fundamentally the same' (p.23)

Although affirming that 'education is a preparation for life, not in the first place, for livelihood...the development of the whole man, and not the mere training of a factory hand' (p.60) the Newbolt committee were pleased to have received evidence from the business world to the

effect that literature was regarded by many employers as a better preparation for employment than humdrum exercises in grammar and punctuation:

'...many firms criticised the schools on the ground that too little attention was given to literature and guidance in reading' (p.130).

And again, 'it was refreshing to find the teaching of literature advocated as an essential preparation for a business career' (ibid.). 'We think (wrote one employer) that a great deal of time spent in grammar, spelling, punctuation would be far better used in the study of English literature in its broader aspects...' (ibid.). Similarly, in the field of technology, the Report applauds 'the introduction of a training in English into every technical course...a training carefully planned so as to be...an integral part of the course and to have a close and obvious connection with the profession or craft for which the students were preparing themselves' so as to 'give technology the soul which it now lacks and, in the end, perhaps bring a new spirit into business at large' (p.153). This prefigures  the words of Dr E F Schumacher (see page 50 of this thesis) half a century later.

Although literature needs to be brought into relation with the business and technological world it remains an art, and not a science (p.206). In this resides its value and its difficulty: 'literature, not being a knowledge subject, cannot and should not be taught. It is to be communicated to the students in such a way that they will experience it rightly, that right experience being the sole aim of literary work. Now this makes literature awkward material for classroom purposes' (p.150). All too often, the Report confesses, "the schoolmaster devitalizes literature" (p.122), and evidence from the headmasters of public schools suggested that they were loath to introduce English literature into the classroom (in place of the classics) for that very reason:

The feeling for literature they regard as a delicate plant which might not survive in the atmosphere of the classroom. Thus the Headmaster of Sherborne appealed to all in authority not to kill the enjoyment of English Literature and English Composition by drawing them into the maelstrom of competing "subjects" (p.121)

The answer to this problem proposed in the Report is 'That if literature is to be enjoyed by the children it must be entrusted to teachers with a love of it' (p.348). Such teachers can preserve the vitality of literature by making it obvious from the outset 'that literature is alive, that it is the sublimation of human thought, passion, feeling, that it is concerned with issues which are of universal interest, that in short it is flesh and blood and not stucco ornamentation' (p.276). If it is 'flesh and blood' it is also 'the record and rekindling of spiritual experiences' (p.21). And this brings us to the Newbolt Report's views on the place of the Bible within the study of English literature.

Two feelings have...been prevalent concerning the Bible as a means of education. On the one hand, it has been held too sacred in character to be lawfully treated as "mere literature"; on the other hand, it has been regarded as a canon of revealed truth, requiring an interpretation which has been the subject of dispute and division between religious sects. (p.341)

One of the members of the Newbolt committee, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, had described the Bible as 'a literary achievement one of the greatest in our language' and again as 'the most majestic thing in our literature and the most spiritually living thing we inherit' (p.341). The committee therefore regarded the Bible as an important part of a liberal education if studied in a 'free and impartial' spirit: 'If we set aside, as we do with any other classic, all consideration of its bearing upon dogmatic religion, there can be no division of opinion as to its historical position and effect in this country' (pp.342-343). Therefore, 'we desire that in all the schools of the country, Elementary as well as Secondary, the reading of the Bible should not be confined to the time set apart for religious instruction, but that its claim upon the time devoted to English studies should also be recognized', for example in the form of 'books of literary extracts in which selected passages from the Bible find a place beside other examples of great literature' (p.347).

Literature is seen, then, by the writers of the Newbolt Report to contribute to the spiritual, mental and emotional development of the schoolchild and to be deeply relevant to the life and experience of the

individual and the community. However, literary study is not sociology:

"the social problem" is not directly the business of literature, and... those who conceive it to be so have failed to appreciate the true function of literature. On the other hand we believe that, if rightly presented, poetry will be recognised by the most ardent social reformers as of value, because while it contributes no specific solution of the social problem it endows the mind with power and sanity; because, in a word, it enriches personality. (p.255)

Reaffirmation: From Spens to Plowden

The Spens Report (1938) echoes in its section on English Literature and Language a number of the preoccupations of the Newbolt Report. The centrality of English in the school curriculum had been epitomised in the earlier report in the well-known dictum 'every teacher is a teacher of English, because every teacher is a teacher in English'; similarly, the Spens Report asserts that, 'for the majority of pupils we think that the school itself should adopt a unifying principle in its curriculum, and we recommend that it be found in the teaching of English and that assembly of subjects which are often loosely spoken of as the English subjects' (p.173), literature of course being one of these areas. Like the Newbolt Report the Spens Report fears the effects on literary appreciation of the classroom ethos and the examination system: 'In regard to the study of English literature we are recommending that set books should not be prepared for examination. We believe that the form of study which these involve does real harm to the growth of an interest in literature...' (p.xxiv). How far the appreciation of literature 'can be taught at all is still a matter for argument', says the Report:

But there is a general agreement that no course in English is complete which does not introduce pupils to the richness and beauty of the literature which is our proudest heritage. Love of reading, joy in the discovery of literary beauty, enlargement of imaginative experience, these are among the most treasured fruits of a sound English education. (p.219).

The arguments adduced in favour of literary studies include preparation for the increase in 'available leisure time', building up 'a national consciousness' and safeguarding 'literary standards' said to be 'threatened

on every side' (p.226). The importance of the personality, the sympathy and receptiveness of the teacher is stressed in the Spens Report; no training can supply the vital quality required 'for the right teaching of literature':

This quality is sincerity; a belief in the value of English literature for its own sake, and a real love of its finest manifestations. This belief and this love can, like religion, be "caught but not taught". They are revealed not by easy raptures or didactic exhortation or fervent or extravagant expression, but by a kind of inward glow which warms all those who come in contact with it...(pp.227-228).

The Newsom Report, twenty-five years later, adds little to this except to encourage the study of literature in combination with other humanities subjects in project work and 'to take account of television as a social force' with obvious implications for the 'enjoyment of the arts' (p.74). For the Newsom Report the main value of literature is its insight into human relations:

In whatever job, and at whatever level of skill, the pupils may subsequently be working, they will all need to enter into effective relations with other people if they are to work efficiently and happily. What they take with them from school in improved powers of speech and in sympathetic insight into human relationships gained through literature, will be of great value to them here. (p.159)

The pupils' academic ability is irrelevant, says the report, in calculating the potential value of literature: 'All pupils, including those of very limited attainments, need the civilizing experience of contact with great literature and can respond to its universality' (p.155).

The next official pronouncement relating to literature in schools came two years after the Newsom Report in the Schools Council Working Paper Number Three on English - a paper which sets out 'a programme for research and development in English Teaching'. Literature in this paper is chiefly valued for its help in developing empathy and a sense of human solidarity:

If pupils can be led by degrees to meet these writings receptively, sensing the common humanity that links writer and reader, and responding to his imaginative interpretation of the world they can gain a great deal. Unfamiliar aspects of life will become known and understood; and some of the familiar will be met in a different context, which helps adolescents to feel themselves a part of the community and not an oddity within it. The child who has read The Silver Sword knows something of

what it means to be a refugee; the older pupil learns the meaning of defeat from The Trojan Women. Someone entering wholly, for once, into the feelings of others can be helped to sense what it is like to be a coloured man in a 'white supremacy' area...or to encounter the death of someone very close. This is to become less vulnerable, while gaining rather than losing sensitivity. (my italics) (p.4).

I have emphasized the final sentence of the extract above because it seems to me to present in a balanced yet profound way a highly significant function of literature. The Working Paper seeks to encourage close attention to the literary text, and for older children particularly, reading with 'selectivity and an intelligently critical attitude' (p.5), while recognizing the essential relation between literature and life: 'prose and poetry are nothing to most people unless they are relevant to the human condition' (p.5).

In seeking to delineate the field for future research in English the paper recognizes that 'some problems do not lend themselves easily to systematic break-down; the teaching of literature, in particular, can never be too organised a process' (p.11). Nevertheless, some useful suggestions are given for researchers, notably in the proposal:

to analyse the purposes reading serves, both in school and in leisure time, and in adult life; and to decide which of the various aims that have been set down to justify the teaching of literature should be emphasized at different stages of education; and which books, at different stages, will best fulfil these aims:

- (i) extension of experience
- (ii) extension of knowledge
- (iii) sharpening of sensitivity
- (iv) preparation for what has to be met in life
- (v) release from tension
- (vi) acquisition of sound attitudes and values
- (vii) knowledge of the literary heritage
- (viii) understanding of the role of man in the world
- (ix) education of the aesthetic response (p.13)

These aims inevitably overlap and interact with one another, but provided this is recognized the breakdown seems a helpful one.

A good deal is said about books in the Plowden Report (1967), where literature is treated alongside information books in use in the primary school. Discussing poetry, the Report makes a gentle sideswipe at Matthew Arnold: 'It is doubtful whether poetry has ever been well treated in the

majority of schools. Matthew Arnold recommended Mrs Heman's poems, admittedly with some reservations' (p.216)! However, the Report acknowledges that the range of choice is considerably greater now than it was in Arnold's time: 'There is now a wide range of children's books, notably enriched by translations of the better books written abroad' (p.214), although, 'probably teachers are not sufficiently informed about the excellence of many contemporary children's stories or of their availability in cheap editions' (pp.215-216), and 'there is still an insufficient supply of good light literature for the less able children' (p.215). The Plowden Report recognizes the importance of stories:

We are convinced of the value of stories for children, stories told to them, stories read to them and the stories they read for themselves. It is through story as well as through drama and other forms of creative work that children grope for the meaning of the experiences that have already overtaken them, savour again their pleasures and reconcile themselves to their own inconsistencies and those of others. (p.216)

Stories are seen as an aspect of 'play' impregnated with value:

As they 'try on' first one story book character, then another, imagination and sympathy, the power to enter into another personality and situation which is a characteristic of childhood and a fundamental condition for good social relationships, is preserved and nurtured. It is also through literature that children feel forward to the experiences, the hopes and fears that await them in adult life. It is almost certainly in childhood that children are most susceptible, both to living example and to the examples they find in books. As children listen to stories, as they take down the books from the library shelves, they may, as Graham Greene suggests in "The Lost Childhood", be choosing their future and the values that will dominate it. (p.216)

Cautious confidence: the Bullock Report

In 1975, half a century after the Newbolt Report, the Bullock Report, A Language for Life is the next full-scale survey of the aims, scope, achievements and shortcomings of the teaching of English language and literature in England. Like the Newbolt Report, it recognizes the claims that literature can help to 'shape the personality, sharpen the critical intelligence; (and act as)...a powerful instrument for empathy, a medium through which the child can acquire his values' (p.124). However, in the later report this recognition is severely qualified:

In recent years it has been questioned whether literature does in fact make the reader a better and more sensitive human being. What was a matter of

self-evident truth in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is no longer exempt from question. Few would subscribe to the simple view that it offers models for living which the reader lifts from the pages. (p.124)

An American educationist is quoted as saying that 'there is no evidence that the reading of literature in schools produces in any way the social or emotional effects claimed for it' (ibid.). Nevertheless, 'in Britain the tradition of literature teaching is one which aims at personal and moral growth. It is a soundly based tradition, and properly interpreted is a powerful force in English teaching' (p.125). Perhaps in view of the apparent contradiction here the emphasis should be on the words 'aims at' above. Among the reasons for pursuing these aims (despite the lack of availability of evidence as to their success) the Bullock Report speaks of the way in which 'literature brings the child into an encounter with language in its most complex forms' by means of which 'it provides imaginative insight into what another person is feeling' and 'confronts the reader with problems similar to his own'. Thus 'books compensate for the difficulties of growing up' (p.125). Like the Newbolt Report, the Bullock Report affirms the relation between literature and life: 'The child gets most enjoyment from those stories which say something to his condition and help him to resolve...inner conflicts' (ibid.). On the other hand, 'books may offer vicarious satisfaction and little else... and the sympathies they engage and the antipathies they arouse may be far from what we would hope' (p.126). The eliciting of a genuine response to books which present 'a complexity of relationships' and enlarge the 'understanding of the range of human possibilities'...'presents the teacher with one of his most delicate areas of operation, and one where his skill and knowledge play an extremely important part' (p.126).

Narrative material 'provided for children of all ages by far the strongest motivation towards the reading of books' (p.129) yet 'the indications are that narrative books are substantially outnumbered by non-fiction in most primary schools' (p.127). The report's recommendation that 'fantasy, fairy tale and folk-tale should take their place

in the repertoire in the earliest stages of reading' seems to be made partly on the basis of encouraging interest in reading generally and partly for their intrinsic worth: 'We believe that true relevance lies in the way a piece of fiction engages with the reader's emotional concerns' (p.129).

The examination system once again hovers like a depressing cloud obscuring the bright prospects potentially available to literary appreciation; 'There is no doubt that many secondary school pupils develop unsympathetic attitudes to literature as a result of their experience in preparing for an examination' (p.131):

The explanations and the summaries have expanded to take-over point; the literature has receded. We must seriously question what is being achieved when pupils are producing chapter summaries in sequence, taking endless notes to prepare model answers and writing stereotyped commentaries which carry no hint of a felt response. (p.131)

It would seem from the evidence in the Bullock Report that a course of 'O' or 'A' level literature was the surest inoculation against an attack of poetry in the future:

Of 1,000 "O" level and "A" level students only 170 said they would read any more poetry after leaving school; 96 out of the 800 "O" level students, 74 of the 200 "A" level students. (And)...equally revealing was their attitude towards particular texts. The four "O" level poetry anthologies were conspicuously disliked, while at "A" level Milton's poetry, and particularly "Paradise Lost", was notably unpopular. (p.135)

This appears to be partly due to the choice of subject-matter, and partly due to mechanical examination-oriented teaching. In response to the first difficulty the report recommends a more enlightened approach, less 'precious and arcane', with 'poetry of this century and of earlier centuries...read side by side, to the mutual illumination of both' (p.137). As regards the teaching of poetry, a less dogmatic, more open-minded approach is recommended: 'A child derives value from a work of literature in direct proportion to the genuineness of the response he is able to make to it. The teacher's skill lies in developing the subtlety and complexity of this response without catechism or a one-way traffic in apodictic judgments' (p.134).

While recognizing the importance of encouraging the selection of literature of a good quality, and of paying close attention to the text, the Bullock Report suggests that

the main emphasis should be on extending the range of the pupil's reading. True discernment can come only from a breadth of experience. Learning how to appreciate with enthusiasm is more important than learning how to reject. (p.132)

Childrens' reading habits: The Schools Council Survey

That the range of children's reading can prove wider than we may anticipate is evident from Frank Whitehead's important research, Children and their Books, (1977). This is the final report of a Schools Council research project on children's reading habits and presents the findings and implications of a full-scale national survey. It is therefore not easy to summarise in brief. However, some of its more significant features and conclusions must be mentioned here since they bear on both the incidence of reading and the scope of literature as a source of moral enlightenment. In broad terms it seems that the average eleven-year-old child tends to read from choice approximately three books in a month, the thirteen-year-old two and a half books and the fifteen-year-old approximately two books. Of these some 85% are narrative books (mostly fiction, but also including some biographies, autobiographies and memoirs), the remaining 15% being non-fiction. The percentage of non-fiction read by boys, however, is about three times that of girls when this average is analysed out. An extraordinary range of individual choice is illustrated by the fact that:

the 5846 children who named one or more books which they had read during the previous month, mentioned in all no fewer than 7557 separate and distinct titles. 246 if these titles had been mentioned by ten or more children...and accounted for a little under 31% of the total book-mentions by the sample. The remaining 7311 titles were each read by only a few children, often indeed only by a single child. (p.279)

This finding suggests one reason why the book has managed to hold out despite the advent of the ubiquitous television: television necessarily serves Mr Average; the book offers an almost infinite choice to the individual. The books recorded in the survey were categorized as

'childrens narrative' and 'adult narrative' and further sub-divided into 'quality' and 'non-quality' narrative; the 'non-quality' books being 'those in which the involvement of the writer with his subject matter and his audience has been such as to generate a texture of imaginative experience which rises above the merely routine and derivative' (p.112). It appears that at the juvenile stage non-quality narrative outnumbered quality narrative approximately 2:1 (33.4% to 17%) but the 'adult narrative' read was more evenly balanced: 11.4% 'quality' material and 12.1% 'non-quality' material.

Examinations once again come in for criticism in the Whitehead survey:

It was disappointing (though not unexpectedly so) to find that the O-level English literature syllabus, with its traditional set of three books to be studied in detail, bore scant relationship to these pupils' own reading enthusiasm and seemed indeed to have exercised little influence upon their private reading except to inhibit it. (p.193)

Evidence from interviewing pupils in the 14+ range indicated that 'for the most part those who continued to read books despite the pressing demands of school work and social life saw books 'mainly as a means of relaxation and distraction, a way of escaping for the time being from the tensions associated with this examination year' (ibid.).

However, despite the uneven quality of the fiction read and the debatable contribution of examination-literature, it seems that the situation is not entirely gloomy, and that young people are deriving much emotional satisfaction and a certain degree of intellectual stimulation and insight from their reading. Previous studies which had stressed 'the child's quest for instinctual satisfactions in his reading, particularly those related to the emotional conflicts and problems which are uppermost at his particular stage of development' spoke in terms of 'empathy, identification, and disguised or substitute gratification of unconscious wishes...(the) vicarious imaginative satisfaction of a wish-fulfilment kind...' (p.283) Other writers, 'more recently' had stressed 'the continuity between the reading of fiction and the spectator role which we

adopt when we are engaged in a detached evaluative response to events in which we are not actively participating'; recognizing what is 'only a story', the interested onlooker 'sees the fictional happenings through the author's eyes and either takes over or rejects his evaluative judgments on the events described.' In this case 'the implication would seem to be that it is these evaluative judgments which affect us particularly powerfully as we read, and which form the important residue left in our minds from the reading of narrative' (p.283) Whitehead continues:

In our own detailed discussion of some of the most popular books in our lists, ranging from Black Beauty and Five on a Treasure Island to The Day of the Triffids and Jane Eyre, we formed the impression that these two lines of thought are not only both of them relevant but also indeed mutually supporting. In all the 'preferred' books we have examined there is at least one character with whom the young reader could be expected to associate himself emotionally, and this sharing of a particular character's experience normally goes hand in hand with that kind of transposition of the world 'according to an arrangement which is more to his liking' which Freud described as characteristic of both the playing child and the poet...On the other hand it is no less important to recognize that these identificatory and wish-fulfilment elements are normally closely intertwined with the evaluative judgments which the reader is invited to take over from the author; the quality of these evaluative responses and their likely impact upon the child reader at his own stage of development are issues which we need to keep equally clearly in mind as we attempt to guide the young reader towards experiences which (in the words of the Bullock Report) 'enlarge his understanding of the range of human possibilities.' (p.284)

This somewhat lengthy quotation gives the gist of a much more lengthy discussion of the relationship between identification, empathy, wish fulfilment and the 'spectator role' in which the authors examine and compare the theories of Friedlaender (1942), Bettelheim (1949), D W Harding (1937,1962) Lesser (1960), Sachs (1942) and Wolfenstein (1946)

Pending discussion of the implications of certain of these arguments in chapter 11, one or two additional points may be appropriate at this stage. Whitehead draws attention to Harding's dissatisfaction with the vagueness of the term 'identification' and his preference that we should speak 'explicitly of empathy, imitation, admiration or recognition of similarities' (quoted p. 218) according to which aspect of identification we mean. (Such a rule helps us to deal for example with problems of speaking of Black Beauty: the story of a 'good' horse among largely 'bad'

people!) Whitehead notes, however, a certain degree of 'identification' in the popular sense in the tendency for a number of stories with male heroes to be among boys' favourites and for certain female heroines to be admired almost entirely by girls. Two explanations are offered for the reader's frequent willing 'identification' with a character undergoing arduous or harrowing experiences. One, that we sense the need to undergo some necessary tribulation in order to enjoy the emergence to a 'happy ending'. The other, that such vicarious suffering enables us to find relief for some of our feelings of guilt through a sort of emotional masochism. A third and simpler explanation that would apply to some degree, is not mentioned. That is, that in reading of heroic suffering from the safety of our own desk or armchair we are at the same time fully aware intellectually that we are not ourselves actually undergoing it. However selfish this may seem, it must surely be a cause of some satisfaction, or at least relief, to the reader. The plausibility of this explanation is the more likely if we accept the 'spectator role' principle of D W Harding. Another value of this principle of what one might call 'detached involvement' is that it helps to explain how the reader can shift his evaluative perspective from the author's to the characters' points of view in assessing the moral implications of actions and events involved in the narrative.

A disturbing feature of Whitehead's findings is the presence among many worthwhile and many relatively harmless books read by 11-15 year-olds of one or two highly popular books of profoundly questionable moral orientation, notably Richard Allen's Skinhead read by about a hundred of the pupils surveyed and rated highly in the 'preferred' category by them. The callous treatment of sex, race and violence, judging from examples quoted ^{seems} to warrant Whitehead's description of it as 'militantly and miserably intent(albeit incoherently, without even a show of logic or purpose) on destroying value and instilling brutal and cynical attitudes in (the author's) readers' (p.246). The degree to which such material has

a therapeutic 'cathartic' value or a suggestive influence is open to debate, but its use (pending further understanding of this) by teachers, however few in number, in the meantime seems particularly unwise.

An interesting finding by Whitehead is 'the evidence that children whose reading is confined to non-quality narrative are more likely to discard the reading habit at later ages than those whose book reading has been more wide ranging' (p.288). The exclusion of 'non-quality' material, however, is not recommended; the authors preferring to recommend careful guidance and encouragement in book selection by teachers knowledgeable about a wide range of books and about the individual children themselves.

In the process of classifying the books read by the children sampled, the authors found 'that there remained one group of narrative books which could not be classified under either the juvenile/adult or the quality/non-quality dichotomy. These were what we had to call "fairy tales, myths and legends"' (p.280). These books constituted 'quite a small group, and account for only 3.1% of all book mentions's. Buried amidst this small group alongside Brer Rabbit, Snow White, and Cinderella, etc. is the Bible. It is ironical, perhaps that despite the compulsory provision of religious education in the 1944 Education Act and the exhortations of the Newbolt Report, voluntary reading of the Bible is negligible while Enid Blyton, for example, proscribed by many libraries and discouraged by many teachers, turns out to be the favourite author among both boys and girls at all stages from 10+ to 14+, way above Stevenson, Dickens, and Agatha Christie and accounting for just over half the girl readers at 10+. Compulsory education seems to have curious consequences.

A dissonant voice: Neil Postman

The foregoing discussion of literature in relation to value acquisition has concentrated on official or semi-official publications. On the whole, the study of literature in schools is regarded in these publications as intrinsically 'a good thing'. It seems worthwhile, therefore, before

leaving this brief survey to mention one paper representative of an opposite view, and Neil Postman's 'The Politics of Reading' has been selected. The main tenor of Postman's argument is that education for literacy is a kind of conspiracy of the powerful to keep the disadvantaged in society in check. He contends that 'the idea that literacy is the richest source of aesthetic experience' is belied by 'the fact that kids are spending a billion dollars a year to buy LP records and see films'; and the reason 'schools are promoting the idea that the main source of wisdom is to be found in libraries' - difficult of access for the non-literate - is that 'hierarchies derive their authority from the notion of unequal access to information' (pp250-251), and are thus enabled to maintain the status quo. Therefore, 'teachers of reading comprise a most sinister political group, whose presence and strength are more a cause for alarm than celebration' (p.244). They are working to promote a particular 'political ideology' persuading their charges 'what they ought to value' and 'how they should behave' (p.245).

Some teachers dubiously justify literacy-training on a vocational basis, but most would probably argue from a higher ground 'and insist that the basic purpose of reading instruction is to open the student's mind to the wonders and riches of the written word, to give him access to great fiction and poetry, to permit him to function as an informed citizen, to have him experience the sheer pleasure of reading' (p.246). But all this, says Postman, 'is almost totally untrue'. Literacy is encouraged, he says, because 'if you cannot read, you will be a relatively poor market' and 'in order to be a good and loyal citizen, it is also necessary for you to believe in the myths and superstitions of your society' (p.246).

Worst of all, the schools are using these ideas to keep non-conforming youth - blacks, the politically disaffected, and the economically disadvantaged, among others - in their place. By this tack, the schools have become a major force for political conservatism at a time when everything else in the culture screams for rapid change. (p.250)

Print, once a revolutionary innovation, is now old, and 'old technologies do not generate new patterns of behavior' once we have 'routined

and ritualized our responses' to them (p.249). 'What would happen' he asks, 'if our schools took the drastic political step of trying to make the new technology the keystone of education?' (p.250). He suggests in answer that in an atmosphere of "multi-media literacy" teachers would come down from their pedestals and work alongside children so that school would become 'problem-centered, future-centered, and change-centered; and, as such, would be an instrument of cultural and political radicalism' (p.251). The teachers would also have to 'find something useful to do, like for instance, helping young people to resolve some of their more wrenching emotional problems' (p.251).

The quest for literacy, therefore, in Postman's view, is a redundant sham creating casualties all along the route to an unattainable utopia:

To put it bluntly, among every 100 students who learn to read, my guess is that no more than one will employ the process toward any of the lofty goals which are customarily held before us. The rest will use the process to increase their knowledge of trivia, to maintain themselves at a relatively low level of emotional maturity, and to keep themselves simplistically uninformed about the social and political turmoil around them. (p.247)

Some of Postman's arguments are countered by Whitehead's study of children's reading, for instance where 'adult quality narrative' is shown to be read in almost equal proportion to 'non-quality' narrative material, and in the diversity of reading choices found as compared with the limited diet of nourishment offered by television. (The mass media, on this basis, would seem to be potentially more sinister without literacy than with it.) Nevertheless, Postman's paper (although of little use to illiterates) is both ingenious and challenging in its implications for educationalists. Whereas nineteenth century arguments against literacy were from the upper and middle classes in fear of the 'masses', this twentieth century argument against literacy sides with the 'masses' (workers and disadvantaged) against the classes entrenched above them. Postman's final question - 'the ultimate political question of all, "Whose side am I on?"' - seems somewhat simplistic; but he poses other questions which merit careful

attention: 'What is reading for? What is it better or worse than? What are my motives in promoting it?' (p.252). This thesis is concerned with all three.

Literature within a core curriculum

All the indications are that at the time of writing, 1979, the curriculum is in the melting pot and literacy, moral education and religious education are among the ingredients jostling with numeracy, science, technology, the other humanities, arts and sport. A Department of Education and science 'consultative document' Education in Schools (1977) speaks of an 'overloaded' curriculum, of the danger that the curriculum 'is not sufficiently matched to life in a modern industrial society' and of a 'need to investigate the part which might be played by a "protected" or "core" element of the curriculum common to all schools' (p.11). It is said that 'existing practice needs to be reviewed as a preliminary to defining a new framework' (p.40). In view of this it is essential that we understand what we mean by 'literacy' and that we understand its relationship to the other areas of the curriculum before any new pattern is allowed to 'set' into a rigid edifice of curricular expectations. It may be indeed that a proper understanding of the nature of literacy may help to preserve an element of flexibility in whatever emerges from the debate on the curriculum. While it can be justifiably argued that teachers in the United Kingdom need the security of more central guidance than they have been accustomed to receive in the past, it is equally true that the Zietgeist will not tolerate dogmatic inflexibility in the curriculum. Fortunately the 'consultative document' recognizes that in some parts of the curriculum 'where teachers are planning to develop their pupils' imagination and social awareness, it may not be possible to be...precise' (p.8) in establishing levels of achievement and setting 'a series of targets for the pupils according to a logical sequence of difficulty' (ibid.). The problems of examinations in literature have been indicated in our discussion already. It is important that these problems should continue to be recognized. Flexibility in religious and moral education

would seem to be equally important, and again the consultative document recognizes that 'our society is a multicultural, mutiracial one, and the curriculum should reflect a sympathetic understanding of the different cultures and races that now make up our society' (p.41).

There is considerable recognition of the need for flexibility in a recent working paper produced by H M Inspectorate, Curriculum 11-16 (1977):

Adults of the future need to be equipped to make their own response to change. Schools have therefore both to encourage flexibility of mind and adaptability of skills, and yet maintain consistent values. The contribution of the curriculum to the moral, ethical and spiritual areas of experience remains of prime importance. (p11).

Even although it cannot propose an answer, it is reassuring that this working paper asks the question: 'How can a school ensure that preparation for examinations does not stunt the development of qualities of curiosity, inventiveness and imagination?' (p.11) - qualities which 'enrich personal living...beyond the formal limits of education'. In its approach 'towards a common curriculum' this paper sees its construction in terms of 'areas of experience' rather than in the form of traditional rigid 'subjects', although it is recognized that it will probably be through the conventional subject fields that these 'areas of experience' will be reflected. A checklist of these areas includes: 'the aesthetic and creative; the ethical; the linguistic; the mathematical; the physical; the scientific; the social and political; and the spiritual' (p.6) Broadly speaking the field of 'literature', with which this thesis concerned, relates closely to the first three and the last-named of these areas; and it should be seen as complementary to, rather than in opposition to, the other areas listed.

This brings us to the question of specialisation versus breadth of studies. The Spens Report (1938) saw 'a general liberal culture' (p.411) as the object of secondary education, believing that from 13+ 'or as soon as special interests or aptitudes become evident a pupil should concentrate on a smaller range of subjects, so long as these include English, a language and Science or Mathematics (p.xxiii). This meant that although a smaller

number of subjects was to be studied at that stage a certain range of experience was to be maintained. Matthew Arnold was quoted in support of this:

The ideal of a general liberal training is, to carry us to a knowledge of ourselves and the world. We are called to this knowledge by special aptitudes which are born with us; the grand thing in teaching is to have faith that some aptitudes of this kind everyone has. This one's special aptitudes are for knowing men - the study of the humanities; that one's special aptitudes are for knowing the world - the study of nature. The circle of knowledge comprehends both, and we should all have some notions, at any rate, of the whole circle of knowledge... (quoted, p.410-11)

Without getting involved in the dubious 'special aptitudes' debate, it is clear that the aim here is for a certain breadth of studies. This broad view seems to have been diminished, despite protestations to the contrary, by the orientation of the Crowther Report (1959). Its discussion of 'complementary elements' seems to have been outweighed by its essential endorsement of 'the English principle of specialisation, or intensive study' (p.261) with the object of 'educating an élite, an intellectual aristocracy on whom the most stringent academic demands can be made' (p.259). Within a decade of the Crowther Report its divisive effects were being felt. In W D Wall's (1968) words:

Whatever might be the origin and extent of 'subject-mindedness' there is fairly general agreement that the present patterns of specialization have unfortunate consequences. To invite pupils to choose between, virtually, a wholly scientific education and one which excludes science altogether, is not the happiest preparation for life in a technological society. (p.85)

Ten years further on the problem still remains. Fortunately, perhaps, increased recognition of the importance of language and its various forms and uses in different disciplines and modes of thought may help educators to surmount this difficulty. This was one of the concerns in which Matthew Arnold, particularly in Literature and Dogma was ahead of his time, and one of the reasons which makes a re-examination of his work refreshing and relevant at the present time.

P A R T T W O

ARNOLD'S LITERATURE AND DOGMA: ITS
RECEPTION AND ORIENTATION

CHAPTER FOUR

'LITERATURE AND DOGMA: A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

I have always thought...that merely to destroy the illusions of popular Christianity was indefensible. Time, besides, was sure to do it; but when it is done, the whole work of again cementing the alliance between the imagination and conduct remains to be effected.

Matthew Arnold, God and the Bible (1875)

The question raised by the (Forster Education) bill was whether religious instruction in tax-supported schools should be secular or sectarian - whether, in Arnold's terms, it should be literary or dogmatic.

James Livingston, ed. Literature and Dogma
(1970)

This chapter is essentially a straightforward exposition of Matthew Arnold's Literature and Dogma (1873). It is immediately followed by a chapter dealing with contemporary and some subsequent criticism and evaluation of the work. My own criticism is reserved for inclusion in later chapters, wherever it seems to me most appropriate.

Arnold's aims in Literature and Dogma

In the Preface to the Popular Edition of 1883, Arnold states his main reasons for writing Literature and Dogma as follows:

The object of Literature and Dogma is to re-assure those who feel attachment to Christianity, to the Bible, but who recognise the growing discredit befalling miracles and the supernatural. Such persons are to be re-assured, not by disguising or extenuating the discredit which has befallen miracles and the supernatural, but by insisting on the natural truth of Christianity. (Super VI, ppl42-3)

But in fact the book goes beyond this stated aim, and includes a thorough-going criticism of the contemporary 'pseudo-science of theology'; an examination of the grounds upon which modern Christians, or would-be Christians, can be expected to come to terms with ancient scriptural writing; and an insistence on the practical, ethical nature of Christianity as opposed to an airy-fairy, other-worldly interpretation founded upon unverified and unverifiable verbalism. This part of his object finds expression in the Preface to the original edition of 1873:

...the aim of the following essay (is) to show that, when we come to put the right construction on the Bible we give to the Bible a real

experimental basis, and keep on this basis throughout; instead of any basis of unverifiable assumptions to start with, followed by a string of other unverifiable assumptions of the like kind, such as the received theology necessitates. (Super VI, p.151)

Arnold seeks, then to give to the Bible an interpretation which frees Christianity from reliance on miracles and the supernatural, and puts it on an experimental basis, since only verifiable facts open to critical examination would satisfy the demands of increasingly sceptical scientific consciousness which was already steadily sapping away the credibility of traditional interpretations.

He believed that, without the encumbrance of miracles and the supernatural, Christianity would stand 'by its natural truth'. This revolution in the interpretation of the Bible, Arnold was convinced, was inevitable. Authority and absolutism were slowly but surely giving way to democracy and relativism: the 'masses' were rejecting the Bible however much their spiritual mentors and leaders decried their apostasy; and religious dogma could no longer be taken on trust:

Our truth on these matters, and likewise the error of others, is something so relative, that the good or harm likely to be done by speaking ought always to be taken into account. (Super VI, p.147)

But the time had clearly come to speak out: if the 'lapsed masses' were to receive the Bible in any meaningful form,

...we must find for the Bible some other basis than that which the churches assign to it, a verifiable basis and not an assumption. (Super VI, p.150)

Arnold's way of approaching the Bible in order to find a suitable basis was to re-examine the way in which scriptural language is used. This meant employing the resources of culture, in particular literary culture, basing our reading on a knowledge, as far as we can achieve it, of 'the best that has been thought and known in the world.' A truly cultured (as opposed to a doctrinaire) reading of the Bible enables us 'to estimate the proportion and relation in what we read.' By this means we discover the essential difference between biblical and scientific language.

To understand that the language of the Bible is fluid, passing, and literary, not rigid, fixed, and scientific, is the first step towards a

right understanding of the Bible. But to take this very first step, some experience of how men have thought and expressed themselves, and some flexibility of spirit, are necessary; and this is culture.' (Super VI, p.152)

This notion of 'culture' presented in the Preface, Arnold develops in the Introduction where 'literature' (the essence, for Arnold, of culture) is firmly opposed to 'dogma'. Dogmatic theology is created by the exercise of logic and 'correct reasoning' on the data of religion, primarily the scriptures; but unfortunately the scriptures are essentially couched in the language of poetry and consequently all the logic in the world will not create verifiable 'truth' from this data, in the sense that scientific truth is verifiable. The kinds of truth embodied in scripture are however amenable to a more 'literary' form of apprehension and criticism. The kind of judgment 'which forms itself insensibly in a fair mind' as a result of wide reading enables us to sense moral and spiritual truths which no amount of argument and 'abstruse reasoning' will extract from the Bible. And this judgment 'comes almost of itself...easily and naturally, and without any turmoil of controversial reasonings.'

In other words, the Bible being literary material, literary criticism is appropriate for its exegesis; science being concerned with material facts, logic and reasoning are the appropriate means of interpreting and systematising its data. For 'abstruse reasoning' (i.e. logical, 'pseudo-scientific' expansion and systematisation of non-verifiable, because essentially poetical, expression) there is no appropriate use at all. Theologians - 'the athletes of logic' - by their excessive preoccupation with this have created for the modern mind a barrier rather than a bridge to religious understanding; and Christianity in consequence must be 're-cast' if it is to survive, and recast with its emphasis on conduct rather than on adherence to verbal formulations of orthodoxy.

Arnold develops this theme in twelve chapters. He shows how the ethical religion adopted by the Hebrews (Chapter One) is invaded by

superstition ('Aberglaube') during a period of extreme trial (Chapter Two); a new practical and intuitive emphasis however is established by Jesus (Chapter Three) only to be obscured by appeals for the sanctions of Christianity to proofs from prophecy (Chapter Four) and miracles (Chapter Five). In Chapter Six, Arnold insists that Jesus is not to be confused with his reporters; but despite their shortcomings the available records yield valuable testimony of Jesus to himself (Chapter Seven) upon which Christian faith can be based (Chapter Eight). The Creeds embodied a second invasion of superstition centering this time on the New Testament (Chapter Nine); and as a result of this it is scarcely surprising that the orthodox conception of God and the Bible is untenable to the contemporary 'masses' (Chapter Ten). The true greatness of the Old Testament (Chapter Eleven) and of the New Testament (Chapter Twelve) lies not in speculative metaphysics, but in ethical aspiration, and the persuasive life and teaching of Jesus, respectively. The two key words in Arnold's thesis are 'conduct' and 'culture'. Culture is necessary for us in forming an adequate conception of God and the Christian religion; but it is in conduct ('three-fourths of life') that the living, experimental proof, for Arnold, of the validity of Christianity can be found.

It is now necessary to examine this argument in somewhat greater detail. This task has been considerably simplified (although by no means governed) by reference to James Livingston's (1970) edition of Literature and Dogma, skilfully abridged to present the main arguments of the book without the repetitiveness characteristic of Arnold's somewhat leisurely approach.

'Religion given': Language, Theology and Science

Chapter One, 'Religion Given', by far the longest chapter in the book, establishes the main line of Arnold's argument, which is to trace the effect of religion 'on the language of the men from whom we get the Bible' and to examine the implications of inherited religious language for the contemporary debate between Christians and scientists, or rather

between the outlooks characteristic of theologically and scientifically orientated disciplines.

Because theologians employ literary terms as if they were scientific terms, religious discourse abounds in ambiguity. In particular, says Arnold, the word 'God' ('that supreme term with which religion is filled') creates endless confusion because it is used 'as if it stood for a perfectly definite and ascertained idea, from which we might without more ado, extract propositions and draw inferences, just as we should from any other definite and ascertained idea' (Super VI, p.170); but it is in fact a term of poetry and eloquence, a term thrown out, so to speak, at a not fully grasped object of the speaker's consciousness, a literary term, in short; and mankind mean different things by it as their consciousness differs. (Super VI, p.171)

Behind the individual variations in the use of the term, however, there must lie a 'common substratum' of meaning upon which they all rest; and (wisely ignoring the implications of a brief, dubious excursion into etymology) Arnold affirms for the time being as its 'real meaning' what he takes to be Luther's understanding of the word 'God': 'good' or 'the best that man knows or can know' (ibid.).

His next concern is to demonstrate, by reference in particular to Old and New Testament writers, that religion has nothing to do with metaphysics, but is essentially a matter of conduct: but people have on the whole preferred to give their energies in seeking to 'understand' it than in the doing of it, since the latter is a much harder option if seriously undertaken. Arnold argues that since conduct constitutes 'some three-fourths of life', this aspect of religion is highly important. Theologians have tended to dodge the practical implications of Christianity by their distinction between 'religion' and 'ethics'. But,

...the antithesis between ethical and religious is...quite a false one. Ethical means practical, it relates to practice or conduct passing into habit or disposition. Religion also means practical, but practical in a still higher degree; and the right antithesis to both ethical and religious, is the same as the right antithesis to practical, namely, theoretical. (Super VI, p.176)

The difference between religion and morality is therefore simply one of degree. 'And the true meaning of religion is thus, not simply morality, but morality touched by emotion' (Super VI, p.176). The cultivation of due feeling for morality is achieved in the same way as our emotions for other matters are nourished, 'by dwelling upon it, by staying our thoughts upon it, by having it perpetually in our mind' (Super VI, p.178), and in this matter the biblical writers were pre-eminent. They recognized, among other things, that our powers of achievement in the sphere of conduct are uneven, and often largely dependent upon forces beyond ourselves. These forces insofar as they are benificent and creative can be summed up under one head as 'the stream of tendency by which all things seek to fulfil the law of their being' (Super VI, p.189). This is the second definition of 'God' given by Arnold. Because this 'stream of tendency' extends beyond the lives of individual men and women - it is there before their arrival in the world and remains afterwards - Israel named it The Eternal.

This was what they intended in that name, which we wrongly convey, either without translation, by Jehovah, which gives us the notion of a mere metaphysical deity, or by a wrong translation, Lord, which gives us the notion of a magnified and non-natural man. (Super VI, p.182)

Cooperating with 'the stream of tendency' (which underlines and perpetually patterns out creation) leads to fulfilment; opposing it leads to frustration and unhappiness. Thus the concept of The Eternal is based on experience and not on metaphysical speculation as are the terms such as 'the self-existent' and 'the absolute' beloved of theologians.

Inevitably Israel* personified this power for he was 'strongly moved' in support of it, and in recognition of its constant support for his own strivings towards right conduct. In this connection Arnold quotes with respect some words of Goethe which are to recur from time to time as one of the many leitmotifs of Literature and Dogma: 'Man never

*Incidentally, Arnold continually personifies the Hebrew race by his constant use of the term 'Israel' as though of an individual.

knows how anthropomorphic he is'. 'In poetry and eloquence', he avers, man's natural tendency to anthropomorphism is appropriate and seemly, 'but in science it often leads him astray.'

In due course the same poetic and oratorical tendency leads the Hebrew religionist to use the term 'Father' for 'God' - 'because the power in and around us, which makes for righteousness is indeed best described by the name of this authoritative but yet tender and protecting relation.' (Super VI, p.185) This use of personification, of concrete rather than abstract terms, is approved by Arnold who finds in it a propriety 'which contrasts strongly with the licence of affirmation in our Western theology.' He prefers, for example, the Old Testament phrase, 'The high and holy One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy' (Psalm lvii, 15) to the more modern Western theologians' 'the moral and intelligent governor of the universe', not despite, but because of, its more modest imprecision.

Evidently, if the object be one not fully to be grasped, and one to inspire emotion, the language of figure and feeling will satisfy us better about it, will cover more of what we seek to express, than the language of literal fact and science. The language of science about it will be below what we feel to be the truth.' (Super VI, p.189)

Scientific language, used in this region, 'attempts too much'; if we want in our religion 'to have what is admittedly certain and verifiable, we must content ourselves with very little.' (Super VI, p.190)

Next Arnold turns to the concept of 'revealed religion', and just as he disputes the common antithesis between 'ethical' and 'religious' he objects to the notion of an antithesis between natural and revealed religion. It is false, he says,

For that in us which is really natural is, in truth, revealed. We awake to the consciousness of it, we are aware of it coming forth in our mind; but we feel that we did not make it, that it is discovered to us, that it is what it is whether we will or no. If we are little concerned about it, we say it is natural; if much, we say it is revealed. But the difference between the two is not one of kind, only of degree. The real antithesis, to natural and revealed alike, is invented, artificial.' (Super VI, pp.194-5)

It is the 'system of theological notions about personality, essence,

existence, consubstantiality' which is artificial religion, since it does not arise naturally in our consciousness but is 'invented by theologians, - able men with uncommon talents for abstruse reasoning.' The essential thing about the religion of the Bible, for Arnold, is that it demonstrates 'with incomparable force and efficacy' 'the great natural truth, that "righteousness tendeth to life",' - that happiness belongs to just and wise conduct; furthermore this truth is experimentally verifiable for those who care to assay it. It is in this sense that Arnold regards the religion of the Bible as revealed, and not as a consequence of any theory of divine authorship or even divine inspiration; it is, for Arnold, both natural and revealed religion at one and the same time.

Finally, Arnold attempts a third definition of 'God', or the 'Eternal': 'the enduring power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness.' (Super VI, p.200) By means of this definition he seeks to avoid dependence on any notions of special 'revelation'; to stand religion firmly upon an ethical foundation; and to make no more assertions about God than can be verified from the experience of those adopting the religious hypothesis. He does not mean to imply by this definition that 'everything is for the best in the best of all possible worlds' (in the manner of Leibnitz), although Arnold's outlook is ultimately optimistic; but simply that right conduct will find power available for its execution to all appearances beyond the forces immediately available to the agent.

It is the special distinction of the Hebrews (Arnold concludes the chapter) to have presented the world with a powerful, monotheistic and ethical concept expressed in vital and vibrant language,

And as long as the world lasts, all who want to make progress in righteousness will come to Israel for inspiration, as to the people who have had the sense for righteousness most glowing and strongest; and in hearing and reading the words Israel has uttered for us, carers for conduct will find a glow and a force they could find nowhere else. (Super VI, p.199)

'Aberblaube Invading': Ethics undermined by superstition

In his second Chapter Arnold seeks to show how and why superstition (or 'Aberglaube', as he prefers to call it) invaded and undermined the pure, ethical religion of Israel. But first he substantiates his contention that the leading idea of the Old Testament was originally 'Conduct brings happiness' or 'Righteousness tendeth to life' by innerable quotations from the book of Psalms, and from Proverbs, Job, Jeremiah, Zechariah, Chronicles and Isaiah. For example, 'Blessed is the man whose delight is in the law of the Eternal; his leaf shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth it shall prosper' (Psalm i, 1,2,3); 'Thou wilt show me the path of life, in thy presence is the fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore' (Psalm xvi, 11); and so on. This early confidence, however, he shows to have been undermined by the passage of events. Defeat and degradation, the Exile and subjection to a succession of conquering powers posed a question against the confident assertions of just reward for virtue in earlier days. Against the ring of assurance in the early psalms attributed to David about a thousand years before Christ, we find in the last few centuries approaching the Christian era 'The two perceptions "Righteousness tendeth to life" and "The ungodly prosper in the world"' are left confronting one another like Kantian antinomies.' (Super, VI, p.207)

Under the stifling influence of oppression there were no doubt many, says Arnold,

...who had lost all living sense that the promises were made to righteousness; who took them mechanically, as made to them and assured to them because they were the seed of Abraham...These people were perplexed and indignant when the privileged seed became unprosperous; and they looked for some great change to be wrought in the fallen fortunes of Israel, wrought miraculously and materially.' (Super VI, p.208)

Hence arose, by the time of the Maccabees, 'the set doctrine of the immortality of the soul' coupled with 'the notion of a resurrection of the dead to take their trial for acceptance or rejection in the Most

High's judgment and kingdom.' (Super VI, p.211) The austere spirit of Israel mingling with 'the phantasmagories of more prodigal and wild imagination' of neighbouring and conquering peoples brought in the lofty Messianic idea of 'the great and notable day of the Eternal', 'the consolation of Israel' and the 'restitution of all things.' For Arnold, this notion is a 'magnificent flight' of the imagination, enabling Israel to cope spiritually with the crushing and baffling series of events to which they were subjected. But it remains, nevertheless,

...a kind of fairy-tale, which a man tells himself, which no one, we grant, can prove impossible to turn out true, but which no one also can prove certain to turn out true. It is exactly what is expressed by the German word 'Aberglaube,' extra-belief, belief beyond what is certain and verifiable. Our word 'superstition' had by its derivation this same meaning, but it has come to be used in a merely bad sense, and to mean a childish and craven religiosity. With the German word it is not so...Extra-belief, that which we hope, augur, imagine, is the poetry of life, and has the rights of poetry. But it is not science; and yet it tends always to imagine itself science, to substitute itself for science, to make itself the ground of the very science out of which it has grown. (Super VI, pp.212-3)

'Religion New-Given: inwardness reasserted

The coming of Christianity is the theme of the third chapter, 'Religion New-Given'. If the 'Aberglaube' of a violent and cataclysmic messianic restitution had served to save the faith of Israel from destruction; the advent of Jesus, adopting (or being allotted) this mantle, served to restore the stream of Israel's religion to a proper basis. 'Jesus Christ was undoubtedly the very last sort of Messiah that the Jews expected' whatever theologians may say about 'the characters of humility, obscurity and depression' being commonly attributed to the Jewish Messiah. (Super VI, p.214)

...and yet Christendom with perfect justice has made him the Messiah, because he alone took, when his nation was on another and a false tack, a way obscurely indicated in the Old Testament, and the one only possible and successful way, for the accomplishment of the Messiah's function: - to bring in everlasting righteousness. (Super VI, p.214)

And the essential modification which Jesus brought to the direction of religion was to substitute for an increasingly external observance of ritual and mechanical duty 'in which the heart had no share' a new

inwardness. For Jesus religion was a personal and individual matter involving the individual's emotions and thus restoring the sense of well-being, of joyous fulfilment, or happiness to the business of conduct.

His teaching was 'irresistably prepossessing':

He put things in such a way that his hearer was led to take each rule or fact of conduct by its inward side, its effect on the heart and character; then the reason of the thing, the meaning of what had been mere matter of blind rule, flashed upon him.' (Super VI, p.219)

In other words, although Arnold does not explicitly point it out at this stage, Jesus put things in a 'literary' rather than in a 'dogmatic' way; and to interpret his teaching an intuitive response is demanded. Men must make 'a return upon themselves' (a favourite phrase of Arnold's) in order to understand and respond to Jesus' largely parabolic teaching; and the self-knowledge acquired by this return would provide a securer basis for conduct and restore the 'clearness, spirit, energy and happiness' in association with 'right action' that the blind pursuit of mechanical formulae had denied them.

Self examination, self-renouncement, and mildness, were...the great means by which Jesus Christ renewed righteousness and religion. (Super VI, pp.220-221)

By yoking 'mildness' with 'self-examination' and 'self-renouncement' Arnold rejects the fiercer, Calvinistic brands of self-reproach and humiliation; he speaks rather of the 'ardent affection and gratitude' associated with a 'personal devotion to Christ' as providing the motive springs for the kinds of right action that issue in human happiness. At the same time Arnold's emphasis on 'inwardness' shifts the focus of human behavior from mechanical attention to surface conduct, to a deeper attention to 'the feelings and dispositions whence conduct proceeds'. (Super VI, p.221)

The advent of Jesus, however, could not dispel man's propensity for Aberglaube. Inevitably he was seen by many as a Messiah who was to restore all things to Israel. After 'long days of darkness and ruin':

The kingdom of David and Solomon was to be restored on a grander scale, the enemies of Israel were to lick the dust, kings were to bring

gifts; there was to be the Son of Man coming in the clouds, judgment given to the saints of the Most High, and an eternal reign of the saints afterwards. (Super VI, p.229)

Arnold recognizes the 'poetical value' of expressions and anticipations of this kind, and concedes that they may even have some moral value - at least as 'a testimony to the strength of Israel's idea of righteousness':

But none of it has a scientific value, a certitude arising from proof and experience. And indeed it cannot have this, for it professes to be an anticipation of a state of things not yet actually experienced. But human nature is such, that the mind easily dwells on an anticipation of this kind until we come to forget the order in which it arose, place it first when it is by rights second, and make it support that by which it is in truth supported. (Super VI, p.230)

Thus Jesus, despite his teaching, and its influence on his immediate disciples, is before long saddled with an Aberglaube exulting in a 'phantasmagory of outward grandeur and self-assertion', a new superstition glorifying in a future advent of Christ with 'a resurrection and judgment' after which Christ's 'rejectors are punished everlastingly,' (Super VI, p.231), and prophecy and miracle usurp the attention due to teaching and example.

Rejection of prophecy and miracle

In Chapters Four and Five of Literature and Dogma, Arnold examines and rejects attempts to validate Christianity by proofs from prophecy and miracle in turn.

Since 'Aberglaube is the poetry of life', Arnold is inclined to view with sympathy the ardent spirits who use their imagination to 'take short cuts' to envisage the triumph of their desire. There is nothing blameable, he says, in the fact that men 'should tell themselves fairy-tales', or even that they 'should make these fairy-tales the basis for what is far more sure and solid than the fairy-tales, the desire itself' (Super VI, p.232). This is natural, perhaps:

And yet there is always a drawback to a man's advantage in thus treating, when he deals with religion and conduct, what is extra-belief and not certain as if it were matter of certainty, and in making it his ground of action. He pays for it. The time comes when he discovers that it is not certain; and then the whole certainty of religion seems discredited, and the basis of conduct gone. This danger attends the reliance on prediction and miracle as evidence of Christianity. (Super VI, p.232)

Man may gain temporary encouragement from signs alleged to demonstrate divine prescience and intervention; but 'an exhibition of supernatural prescience proves nothing for or against the truth and necessity of conduct and righteousness' (Super VI, p.233). Moreover, while hindsight may suggest that words of Jeremiah or Isaiah prefigure the coming of Jesus, an interpretation of such utterances in their context inevitably denies them this specific significance.

True prophecy is a quality of insight ('The great prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah are, critics can easily see, not strictly predictions at all' (Super VI, p.236)); the notion of 'supernatural prescience', on the other hand, is a species of miracle which will not stand up to criticism any more than will other alleged miracles in the modern age:

The 'Zeit-Geist', and the mere spread of what is called enlightenment, superficial and barren as this often is, will inevitably, before long, make this conviction of criticism a popular opinion, held far and wide. And then, what will be their case, who have been so long and sedulously taught to rely on supernatural predictions as a mainstay?' (Super VI, p.236)

Moving on, in Chapter Five, to a closer examination of miracles, Arnold avers that while 'it is almost impossible to exaggerate the proneness of the human mind to take miracles as evidence, and to seek for miracles as evidence' (Super VI, p.245) in religious matters,

the human mind is assuredly passing away, however slowly, from this hold of reliance also; and those who make it their stay will more and more find it fail them, will more and more feel themselves disturbed, shaken, distressed and bewildered. (Super VI, p.245)

It makes no difference whether we attack or defend them, the Time-Spirit, the Zeit-Geist, 'is sapping the proof from miracles'. The human mind is turning away from them because 'it sees, as it experience widens, how they arise.' (Super VI, p.246)

'Under certain circumstances, wherever men are found', their thirst for signs and wonders is such, says Arnold (agreeing with Shakespeare) that:

No natural exhalation in the sky,
No scape of nature, no distemper'd day
No common wind, no custom'd event,
But they will pluck away his natural cause
And call them meteors, prodigies, and signs
Abortives, presages, and tongues of heaven
Shakespeare, King John, (quoted Super VI, p.246)

'Miracles' arise 'honestly and naturally' in men's minds, in answer to transitory but nonetheless deepfelt psychological needs; but in retrospect, with Shakespeare, 'we can see how they create them'. By juxtaposing examples of miracles sacred to Catholics but denied by Protestants with miracles held by Protestants but rejected by Catholics, Arnold demonstrates the lack of any adequate criteria to allow some as genuine and reject others as impostures.

One of two things must be made out in order to place either the Bible-miracles alone, or the Bible-miracles and the miracles of the Catholic Church with them, in a class by themselves. Either they must be shown to have arisen in a time eminently unfavourable to such a process as Shakespeare describes, to amplification and the production of legend; or they must be shown to be recorded in documents of an eminently historical mode of birth and publication. But surely it is manifest that the Bible-miracles fulfil neither of these conditions.' (Super VI, p.247)

Arnold reinforces his point by comparing Christian (Catholic and Protestant held) 'miracles' with non-Christian 'miracles' recorded in Greek and other sources, and reaches the following conclusion:

Experience of the history of the human mind, and of men's habits of seeing, sifting, and relating, convinces us that the miraculous stories of Herodotus or Plutarch do grow out of the process described by Shakespeare. But we shall find ourselves inevitably led, sooner or later, to extend the same rule to all miraculous stories; nay, the considerations which apply in other cases, apply, we shall most surely discover, with even greater force in the case of Bible-miracles.' (Super VI, p.248)

In view of the increasing weakness of reliance on miracle and the need to come to terms directly with the teaching of Jesus, unencumbered by their dubious testimony, a prerequisite of a proper understanding of the New Testament is paradoxically 'to convince oneself of the liability to mistake in the Bible-writers' (Super VI, p.249): all Jesus' reporters being human, they must be recognized to be (without any implied disparagement of their sincerity):

full of the influences of their time and condition, partakers of some of its simple or learned ignorance, -inevitably, in fine, expecting miracles and demanding them. (Super VI, p.250)

Aspects of Jesus: message and misconstructions

In Chapter Six, Arnold develops this theme of the fallibility of Jesus's reporters. He begins by reminding his readers that Jesus himself was not a writer of the New Testament but 'the object of description and comment

by others'. In a curious way, moreover, recognition of the fallibility of his reporters should enhance our apprehension of Jesus, since he becomes 'independent of the mistakes they made':

The depth of their misunderstanding of him is really a kind of measure of the height of his superiority. And this superiority is what interests us in the records of the New Testament; for the New Testament exists to reveal Jesus Christ, not to establish the immunity of its writers from error. (Super VI, p.258)

Arnold quotes sayings from the New Testament recording Jesus' own disapproval of reliance on miracle, and points out that Jesus's rejection of the evidence of miracles must have been powerful indeed in order to convince reporters, who set great store by such things, that his objections should be recorded.

To convey at all to such hearers of him that there was any objection to miracles, his own sense of the objection must have been profound; and to get them, who neither shared nor understood it, to repeat it a few times, he must have repeated it many times. (Super VI, p.262)

Central to Jesus's message, Arnold insists, was the doctrine of inwardness, of personal, individual attachment to the spirit of the Eternal, through right conduct; and this brings with it a sense of well-being which is the genuine evidence of first-hand experience as to the rightness or wrongness of the quality of a person's life, quite independent of third-hand reports of wonderful or unnatural events. For 'after all', Arnold writes, 'there is no necessary connexion between walking on the sea and proceeding from the Eternal that loveth righteousness.' (SuperVI, p.264)

It is the function of criticism, not to join in with orthodox theologians in the justification of this or that bit of Aberglaube, for this kind of criticism is the result of 'an immense literary misapprehension'; but to extract from his reporters, despite their errors and shortcomings, the truest possible conception of the life and teaching of Jesus. An exact picture can never, by the nature of things, be achieved; but the best possible approximation can only be achieved by the exercise of the difficult art of true literary criticism, which

...calls into play the highest requisites for the study of letters; great and wide acquaintance with the history of the human mind, knowledge

of the manner in which men have thought, of their way of using words and of what they mean by them, delicacy of perception and quick tact, and besides all these, a favourable moment and the 'Zeit-Geist.' (Super VI, p.276)

In Chapter Seven, which explores the testimony of Jesus to himself within the evidence provided by the Gospels, Arnold claims that the main burden of the teaching of Jesus relates to the 'restoration of the intuition' by transforming the idea of righteousness from a mechanical adherence to tradition to a new inwardness of response, based on what Arnold calls the method of 'repentance' and the secret of 'peace'. Christ's 'method' demands an 'unceasing inward movement of attention and verification' primarily of motive, for conduct in this sense means 'to have the heart and thoughts in order as to certain matters.' (Super VI, p.283)

The 'secret' of peace is achieved by necrosis - dying to the insistent demands of one's lower and transient self, and living in the freedom of the peace achievable by conformity with one's 'higher and permanent self'. Arnold asserts that the success of Jesus's 'secret' can be confirmed by experience:

Now the value of this rule that one should die to one's apparent self, live to one's real self, depends upon whether it is true. And true it certainly is; - a profound truth of what our scientific friends, who have a systematic philosophy and a nomenclature to match, and who talk of Egoism and Altruism, would call, perhaps, psycho-physiology.' (Super VI, p.294)

Employing the terms Arnold introduces here, 'egoism' is self-destructive (presumably because of its almost inevitable thwarting by the egoism of others), while 'altruism' despite an element of suffering (through self-denial) at its surface, leads essentially to 'peace, joy and life' according to the teaching of Jesus. Finally, in this chapter, Arnold draws attention to what he calls the 'sweet reasonableness' of Jesus, his mildness, and contrasts the gentle but balanced outlook of Jesus with the fierce puritan masochism of certain Christians whose excessive and misplaced manner of self-denial brought peace neither to themselves nor to others. Arnold is anxious to distinguish self-chastisement from the genuine inwardness of self-renouncement which properly developed

brings with it 'epeiēkeia' and a manner of life 'full of grace and truth'.

In Chapter Eight, entitled 'Faith in Christ', Arnold makes two main points: (1) he draws attention to Jesus' own avoidance of theological speculation, and (2) he asserts the inevitability of Jesus' words being misconstrued by his reporters and followers.

It was John, for example, not Jesus, who used the speculative term 'logos' to designate Christ; it was St. Paul, not Jesus, who sought to prove 'salvation to be by Christ alone, from seed, in the promise of Abraham being in the singular not the plural'; and if the evangelists haggled about the family and theological relationship between Abraham, David, Jesus and God, this was not the concern of Jesus himself. (Super VI, chapter 8, *passim*).

True, Jesus clearly took upon himself the mantle of the awaited Jewish Messiah; but his purpose was 'to change their dangerous and misleading ideal of God's Messiah' from a vengeful restorer of Israel's material prosperity to an ideal in which their former 'intuition of God as the Eternal that loveth righteousness' was restored. (Super VI, p.305)

If Jesus himself actually used the Messianic terms attributed to him in the Gospels - 'Messiah, Christ, God's Chosen or Beloved or Consecrated or Glorified One, the Son of God, the Son of Man' (and this is of course debatable), 'his concern...was with his countryman's idea of salvation, not with their terms for designating the bringer of it.' (Super VI, p.308)

In any case, Jesus seems to have preferred the term 'Son of Man' to the others and to have baffled his countrymen's genealogical theosophising with the enigmatic dictum 'Before Abraham was, I am.' (Super VI, p.309)

Theological speculation was avoided by Jesus in favour of his emphasis on inwardness: 'The Kingdom of God is within you', and on conduct: 'Renounce thyself and follow me.' But inevitably these emphases were to be obscured and befogged by well-meaning transmitters of the new religion as Jesus's teachings were elaborated and reinterpreted. In

Jesus's words 'Yet a little while is the light with you: walk while ye have the light, lest the darkness overtakes you unawares' there was 'far wider application than the reporter imagined.' (Super VI, p.322)

It was as if Jesus foresaw the want of his sweet reasonableness, which he could not leave, to help his method and his secret, which he could leave: as if he foresaw his words misconstrued, his rising to eternal life turned into a physical miracle, the advent of the Spirit of truth turned into a scene of thaumaturgy, Peter proving his Master's Messiahship from a Psalm that does not prove it, the great Apostle of the Gentiles word-splitting like a pedantic Rabbi, the most beautiful soul among his own reporters saddling him with metaphysics; - foresaw the growth of creeds, the growth of dogma, and so through all the confusion worse confounded of councils, schoolmen, and confessions of faith, down to our own two bishops bent on 'doing something' for the honour of the Godhead of the Eternal Son! (Super VI, pp.322-3)

Superstition, science and the lapsed masses

Chapter Nine, Aberglaube Reinvading, deals primarily with the creeds of Christendom. Arnold argues that 'our three creeds, and with them the whole of our so-called orthodox theology, are founded upon words which Jesus in all probability never uttered'. (Super VI, p.344) And having adduced evidence to substantiate this premise, he proceeds to discuss the implications arising from it.

The Apostle's Creed he calls 'the popular science of Christianity'; the Nicene Creed 'the learned science of Christianity' and the Athanasian Creed 'learned science with a strong dash of violent and vindictive temper' (Super VI, p.343) Despite its imperfections as a statement of the essentials of Christianity, the Apostles Creed is viewed sympathetically, since it seems to have been a natural and relatively spontaneous development within the early church, and perhaps 'the only vehicle by which, to generation after generation of men, the method and secret of Jesus could gain any access' (Super VI, p.358). But for the 'learned science' of the other two creeds Arnold 'feels no tenderness', because it has gone wrong with a great parade of exactitude and philosophy' creating unnecessary difficulties with its metaphysical speculations.

The problems associated with the Christian creeds were perhaps inevitable,

For dogmatic theology is, in fact, an attempt at both literary and scientific criticism of the highest order; and the age which developed dogma had neither the resources nor the faculty for such criticism.' (Super VI, p.345)

To indicate the degeneration in the use of language by the time of the early Christian dogmatists, in whose era the Creeds arose, Arnold compares the language used by an adherent of St. Augustine in a Book of Soliloquies with the language of the Old Testament psalmists in soliloquy:

Holy Trinity, superadmirable Trinity, and superinenarrable, and super-inscrutable, and superinaccessible, superincomprehensible, super-intelligible, superessential, superessentially surpassing all sense, all reason, all intellect, all intelligence, all essence of supercelestial minds; which can neither be said, nor thought, nor understood, nor known even by the eyes of angels! ' (Super VI, p.342)

This scholastic prayer stresses sophisticated yet totally unverifiable metaphysical speculation, whereas simplicity and 'conduct' seem to be the keynote of the earlier Hebrew writer at prayer:

Teach me to do the thing that pleaseth thee, for thou art my God! let thy loving spirit lead me forth into the land of righteousness!' (ibid.)

The Schoolmen's concern with establishing a 'science' for the Church is much on a par with the later Protestants' efforts to establish hypothetical scriptural justification for their shift in the centre of authority for the faithful; and both are in danger of undervaluing Jesus's concern for the simple moral and spiritual wellbeing of the individual in their anxiety for sophisticated intellectual speculation.

The Catholic Eucharist and the Protestant Doctrine of Justification are neither of them (as some of Arnold's contemporaries, moved more vehemently by the Zeit-Geist would maintain), 'degrading superstitions' - both hold something of spiritual value, and together they stand in some measure for Jesus's 'method of inwardness and sincerity' and his 'secret of self-renouncement.' But the result of excessive attachment is that 'Religion has been made to stand on its apex instead of its base. Righteousness is supported on ecclesiastical dogma, instead of ecclesiastical dogma being supported on righteousness.' (Super VI, p. 356). Both the Catholic and Protestant adherents of Christianity stand to lose touch with the essential

teachings of Jesus as their speculations proceed in complexity; so that while 'both have hold of a great truth, and get from it a great power', eventually, 'Neither has his unerring balance, his intuition, his sweet reasonableness.' (Super VI, p.352)

Arnold's treatment in this chapter of the Protestant Doctrine of Justification is considered in more detail later (chapter 6); at this stage it is sufficient to point out Arnold's prime objection to this and other examples of Christian anthropomorphism and Aberglaube. While they are 'firmly and undoubtingly held', they may serve a valid purpose,

But, after all, the question sooner or later arises in respect to a matter taken for granted, like the Catholic doctrine of the Mass or the Protestant doctrine of Justification: Is it sure? can what is here assumed be verified? And this is the real objection both to the Catholic and to the Protestant doctrine as a basis for conduct; - not that it is a degrading superstition, but that it is not sure; that it assumes what cannot be verified.' (Super VI, pp.360-361)

In Chapter Ten, 'Our Masses and the Bible', Arnold pursues the question of the need for truth to be verifiable. Arnold argues that while 'it is a maintainable thesis that the theological dogmas of the Trinity, the Incarnation and the Atonement, underlie the whole Bible' (Super VI, p.378) - among a whole variety of other speculative theses - the fact remains that 'absolute demonstration is impossible, and the only question is: Does experience, as it widens and deepens, make for this or that thesis, or make against it?' (Super VI, p.378). As the modern climate of thought prevails, more and more people, Arnold asserts, are employing 'the only possible test for a man to employ, - the test of reason and experience.' (Super VI, p.376); and in seeking to put a right construction on the Bible they are naturally inclined to reject whatever theses appear highly improbable - however skilfully argued. The 'masses' as well as the advanced thinkers, are no longer prepared to take things on trust: authority must be intellectually accountable:

This is what everyone sees to constitute the special moral feature of our times: the masses are losing the Bible and its religion. At the Renaissance, many cultivated wits lost it; but the great solid mass of the common people kept it, and brought the world back to it after a start had seemed to be made in quite another direction. But now it is the people which is getting detached from the Bible.' (Super VI, p.362)

If the masses are told there is 'a great Personal First Cause who thinks and loves, the moral and intelligent Author and Governor of the universe,' they want proof of this.

Moreover, they require proof which is clear and certain; demonstration, or else plain experimental proof, such as that fire burns them if they touch it. If they are to study and obey the Bible because it comes from the Personal First Cause who is Governor of the universe, they require to be able to ascertain that there is this Governor, just as they are able to ascertain that the angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles, or that fire burns.' (Super VI, pp366-367)

The current theological conception of God, Arnold insists, are 'assumptions' not 'facts' and since such assumptions are untenable to the modern spirit it is time to return to the simpler conception which seems to have been held by Israel for whom God was 'neither an assumption nor a metaphysical idea' but a power verifiable by experience: 'the power, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness.' (Super VI, p.368) Thus God can be apprehended as 'an intuition, an experience', but is not a subject for 'scientific assertion'.

In answer to the question 'How are we to verify that there rules an enduring Power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness?' Arnold answers:

How? why as you verify that fire burns, - by experience! Is is so; try it! you can try it; every case of conduct, of that which is more than three-fourths of your own life and of the life of all mankind, will prove it to you! Disbelieve it, and you will find out your mistake as surely as, if you disbelieve that fire burns and put your hand into the fire, you will find out your mistake! Believe it, and you will find the benefit of it! This is the first experience.' (Super VI, p.370)

Benjamin Franklin, Horace Greeley, Jeremy Bentham and Mr Herbert Spencer all have ideas on morality, but they lack the genius of the biblical writers for awakening and nourishing an enthusiasm for righteousness, for conduct in tune with the creative, spiritually fulfilling Power which sustains the universe.

Speculative theology has erected a Trinity of three supernatural men in an attempt to designate and encapsulate this Power; but the trinitarian concept is unverifiable notion-work. However, Arnold suggests, it is not unreasonable to think of Jesus as the Son of God in the sense that 'he gives

the method and secret by which alone is righteousness possible.'

(Super VI, p.375) That is to say that by being clearly and eminently in tune with 'the enduring Power that makes for righteousness' Jesus is intimately associated with it; and that attention to his method and secret provides a key to a source of nourishment by means of this Power can be verified experimentally through experience.

The 'true greatness' of the Old and New Testaments

In Chapter Eleven, Arnold deals with what he calls 'The True Greatness of the Old Testament'. It could be said, he writes that 'whether we consider...human affairs at large, or...individual happiness':

...the whole history of the world to this day is in truth one continual establishing of the Old Testament revelation: 'O ye that love the Eternal, see that ye hate the thing that is evil! to him that ordereth his conversation right, shall be shown the salvation of God!' (Super VI, p.392)

The true greatness of Israel lies in its emphasis on right conduct as the key to happiness. Consider the Old Testament record:

The world goes on, nations and men arrive and depart, with varying fortune, as it appears, with time and chance happening unto all. Look a little deeper, and you will see that one strain runs through it all: nations and men, whoever is shipwrecked, is shipwrecked on conduct. It is the God of Israel steadily and irresistibly asserting himself; the Eternal that loveth righteousness.' (Super VI, p.386)

The Aberglaube of 'curious coincidence', 'preternatural interventions' and second comings 'with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in a city shining with gold and precious stones' is of little worth beside the essential insight into human conduct and its consequences which the Hebrew prophets achieved. And as the belief in miracles steadily dissolves, the superstitious element becomes a positive hindrance to spiritual insight.

Another hindrance is the vehement rejection by some Christians of sources of spiritual insight other than the Bible. Popular Christian missions carry with them something of good, but their approach to other faiths is often grotesquely inadequate:

The non-Christian religions are not to the wise man mere monsters; he knows they have much good and truth in them. He knows that Mahometanism and Brahminism, and Buddhism, are not what the missionaries call them; and he knows, too, how really unfit the missionaries are to cope with them.' (Super VI, p.381)

Mohametanism, for example, has a knowledge of 'the all-importance of righteousness' even if it falls short on 'the method and secret of Jesus'. For Brahminism Arnold has little time on account of its pre-occupation with speculative metaphysics - on a par with the adumbrations of western theologians! But Buddhism is 'a religion to be saluted with respect...for it has not only the sense for righteousness, it has, even, the secret of Jesus' (Super VI, p.382) - though not his method, his epikeia.

Thus Arnold attacks narrow-mindedness among his Christian contemporaries and reasserts the need for a new more widely based construction for Christianity:

Win assent in the end the new construction will, but not at once; and there will be a passage—time of confusion first. It is not for nothing, as we have said, that people take short cuts and tell themselves fairy-tales, because the immense scale of the history of 'bringing in everlasting righteousness' is too much for their narrow minds...' (Super VI, p.379)

The urgent need to recognize the approximate, non-scientific nature of religious expression and to apply a more adequate criticism to the Bible will not, Arnold recognizes, meet with instant recognition:

Probably, amongst many religious people, vehement efforts at reaction... (are to be expected)...a recrudescence of superstition; the passionate resolve to keep hold on what is slipping away from them by giving up more and more the use of reason in religion, and by resting more and more on authority...and it will be strange if in the coming time of transition the Church of Rome does not gain. But for many more than those whom Rome attracts there will be an interval, between the time when men accept the religion of the Bible as a thaumaturgy and the time when they perceive it to be something different, in which they will be prone to throw aside the religion of the Bible altogether as a delusion.' (Super VI, pp379-380)

However, Arnold confidently asserts that the days of blind uncritical attachment to the Bible are numbered, while those whose response to the Zeitgeist has caused them to jettison Christianity overhastily, discarding the good with the questionable and unacceptable, will feel their loss; and 'then there will come a time of reconstruction; and then, perhaps, will be the moment for labours, like this attempt of ours to be found useful.' (Super VI, p.380)

In Chapter Twelve, entitled 'The True Greatness of Christianity',

Arnold argues that in the world at large what is really of most value in Christianity has made much less impact than it should have as a result of the obscurantist speculations of both the popular and learned theologians:

...what the world will become by the thorough use of that which is really righteousness, the method and the secret and the sweet reasonableness of Jesus, we have as yet hardly any experience at all.' (Super VI, p.396)

Aberglaube has constantly got in the way of the real, serious application of Jesus's teaching:

Walking on the water, multiplying loaves, raising corpses, a heavenly judge appearing with trumpets in the clouds while we are yet alive, - what is this compared to the real experience offered as witness to us by Christianity? It is like the difference between the grandeur of an extravaganza and the grandeur of the sea or the sky, - immense objects which dwarf us, but where we are in contact with reality, and a reality of which we can gradually, though very slowly, trace the laws.' (Super VI, p.400)

The hope of immortality - natural as this hope is, perhaps, for mortal man - has resulted in the construction of fairy-tales of a 'second advent, the resurrection of the body, the New Jerusalem':

Persons dressed in glorious habits with garlands on their heads, passing among trees, lying down by the fountains, or resting on beds of flowers, amidst a confused harmony of singing birds, falling waters, human voices, and musical instruments.' Or, even, with many, it is that of a kind of perfected middle-class home, with labour ended, the table spread, goodness all around, the lost ones restored, hymnody incessant.' (Super VI, p.403)

And this concentration on speculative dreams of an impossible future has distracted men's minds from present realities and possibilities. 'Let us begin with certainties,' Arnold asserts. And one certainty is 'the sense of life, of being truly alive, which accompanies righteousness' (Super VI, p.404). Christianity can only be felt and understood in the doing, therefore: 'Its grandeur and truth are far best brought out experimentally; and the thing is, to make people see this.' (Super VI, p.396)

In his Conclusion to Literature and Dogma Arnold returns to his persistent theme of the need for culture. Conduct may indeed be 'three-fourths of life', but the other quarter has to be taken care of - otherwise the energies that should naturally have been expended on cultivating art and science are in danger of being applied all amiss - as, for example, in

the manufacture of the abstruse pseudo-scientific theories of dogmatic theology! What is needed by Christians as much as by men of a scientific bent is 'a wide and large acquaintance with the productions of the human spirit, and with men's way of thinking and using words' (Super VI, p.408).

Art and science ('in other words...beauty and exact knowledge') are needed for a total perfection and are even vital in the interests of religion itself. Christians with scientific and literary experience are less likely to create abstruse nonsense or write doggerel hymns - by which God is both 'diserved and displeased.' God, of course, is not (as the theologians would have 'him') a 'PERSON'; but 'it would be harsh to give, at present this turn to our employment of the phrases, pleasing God, displeasing God', says Arnold, in defence of his use of the terms;

And yet, as man makes progress, we shall surely come to doing this. For the clearer our conceptions in science and art become, the more will they assimilate themselves to the conceptions of duty in conduct, will become practically stringent like rules of conduct, and will invite the same sort of language in dealing with them.' (Super VI, p.410)

Thus Arnold concludes where he began - with the influence of the Zeitgeist on men's thoughts and ideas, and with the need for more stringency in our approach to language, recognizing where flexibility is appropriate and where it is not. This recognition, fully developed, is 'Culture'; and it is culture, properly understood, which facilitates the harmonious coexistence of art and science and religion in men's minds.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE RECEPTION OF 'LITERATURE AND DOGMA'

I have read every word of your book on Literature and Dogma...Of course it will make a row, but I think it will do good.

Alexander Macmillan,
in a letter to Matthew Arnold,
(February 15, 1873)

In religion, then, he was destroyer and preserver both; like a good surgeon, he destroyed only for preservation's sake.

Basil Willey: Arnold and Religion (1975)

Arnold is caught between two hostile fires: first, from the traditionalists who think him an infidel; and second, from the infidels who think him a reactionary.

(ibid.)

Publication and range of response

Whether or not Arnold was right in his estimation of Literature and Dogma as his 'most important' book and the one 'most capable of being useful', (Super VI, p.141) there can be no doubt that it made an immediate impact and sustained a hold on the contemporary reading public. It passed through three editions, totalling 3,000 copies in the first year of its publication, 1873; and two more editions accounted for a further 2,500 copies by 1876. The popular edition, published in 1883 sold 8,000 copies during Arnold's lifetime, and 10,500 copies between 1889-1924, not counting a further 50,000 copies of a sixth edition published by Smith and Elder for the Rationalist Press Association between 1902-1909 (Blackburn, 1945). Thousands more copies were sold in successive reprintings of a pirated edition in America, before a new edition of Arnold's works was published by Macmillan and Company of New York 'to accompany his visit to America in 1883'. (Super VI, p.453) And in France a translation by Charles Sarazin appeared in 1876 under the title La Crise Religieuse (ibid.). According to Professor Super the 'total sale of the book must have passed 100,000 copies. It was, in the eyes of most of Arnold's contemporaries...his chief claim to literary greatness' (Super VI, p.454).

Views on the 'greatness' of the work, however, were far from uniform and ranged from near adulation in The Contemporary Review (1873) to shocked hostility in The Guardian (1873)

'We are convinced that this volume is a form of disbelief,' complains The Guardian; 'We believe in the existence of an institution, which is mentioned in the Bible, as it is commonly received, and is therein called "the Church of the living God." Mr Arnold, so far as we can judge from his writings, has never heard of this institution.' In relation to a serious study of miracles, 'his way is simply to toss his head, to assure us that a treatise of this sort is out of date, that it is at variance with the spirit of the age, and so forth.' And 'on no point are the differences between us and Mr Arnold more radical and profound than on that subject which forms part of the title of his book, the subject of dogma.' As for his tone, 'Mr Arnold has never displayed towards those from whom he differs seriously, two persons alone excepted, one grain of courtesy or respect.' The reference to the 'Three Lord Shaftesburys' is, of course, beyond the pale.

Meanwhile, for The Contemporary Review (1873), Literature and Dogma is 'a book of rare moral and intellectual force, original in the greatness and directness of its aim as well as in its style and diction.' 'There are characteristics of Mr Arnold's creed which are likely to make it, to a large section of Englishmen, more attractive than any rival.' Finally, 'we welcome most thankfully the contributions which Mr Arnold has made...towards the truer understanding of the teaching of the Bible.'

A close analysis of a representative selection of contemporary critical reviews of Literature and Dogma will give some idea of the range of response it met with, and of the major preoccupations governing the various reviewers' interpretation of Arnold's thesis.

Guardian of the 'status quo'

The extreme hostility of The Guardian (1873) stemmed from its uncompromising allegiance to the orthodox, establishment point of view.

Under the editorship of Thomas Henry Haddan and M R Sharp, it stood for the absolute sanctity of the Anglican Church and its survival intact amidst the contemporary conflict; the conflict itself being seen in unequivocal terms of 'belief' versus 'unbelief' rather than of kinds or degrees of belief. The Guardian's condemnation of Literature and Dogma arose from a number of objections: to what it saw as pantheism in the work; to Arnold's rejection of miracle, prophecy and revelation; to his use of evidence; to his 'patronising' tone and contemptuous 'dismissal' of the Church. A further sanction for the reviewer's rejection of Literature and Dogma was found in the Westminster Review's praise of it: added proof that the book was 'on the side of unbelief'.

Helpfully, The Guardian specified at the outset, in detail, what it understood by the term belief. Belief, that is to say, 'belief in Christianity', it defined as acceptance of:

...that religion which teaches - that man is alienated from the great Being who made him, in consequence of an original and hereditary enfeeblement; that he has thereby lost the power of fulfilling, and even thoroughly knowing, his duty upon earth, and of preparing for the life to come; and that deliverance from this condition, a reopening of the sources of pardon, of virtue, and of life, has been made by the advent of God in human form to this lower world; by the life and death, the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ. If it be said that this language assumes the existence of a personal God and of a future life, we reply that undoubtedly it does assume them. But we also hold that such truths can be proved by reason and conscience, apart from any further evidence.' (p.780)

A correlative implication of this doctrine is the existence of 'a great Being, Who is no mere soul of the world, but absolutely distinct from it, being its personal Creator and Preserver: a Being Who is alone self-subsistent and self-dependent: Who is Almighty...' Not surprisingly, The Guardian objected to Arnold's dismissal of such a doctrine as the result of 'a mechanical and materialising theology' manifesting an insane license of affirmation about God, an insane license about a future state, a theology which far from being based on sound reason and a true revelation from above, is really the result of the poverty and inanition of our minds.*

*Quoted from The Guardian (p.780), which here conflates several quotations from Arnold into one (Super VI, p.152)

Mr Arnold 'teaches Pantheism' The Guardian concludes, and regards any 'real Theism' (i.e. belief in a personal God) as 'a fairy tale'.

But here the reviewer thinks that the author of Literature and Dogma has tripped up, for 'Mr Arnold tells us that the Almighty "is displeased and disserved" by certain hymns', and 'he informs us that for anybody...to assert that God is a Person is "pseudo-science, by which God is displeased"!'. 'Now', says The Guardian, 'if Mr Arnold knows that God is displeased by certain things, we suppose that God must be a personal Being, for we do not see how a power, like the power of gravitation, can be displeased by anything men say or do.'

This criticism shows a complete misunderstanding of Arnold's way of using words: when he speaks of God being 'displeased' or 'dis-served' by anything he is simply speaking metaphorically. The difference between Arnold's use of such expressions and that of his detractors in the reviewer's camp is that Arnold knows when he is using poetic language while they have blurred the distinction between scientific and poetic modes of understanding and think of 'a magnified non-natural man' (Super VI, p.188) anthropomorphically undergoing a similar mental operation to our own if God is said to be 'displeased'. Arnold would be prepared to paraphrase the assertion that 'God is displeased by a certain action' by some such statement as 'such an action offends or thwarts the stream of tendency by which all things seek to fulfil the law of their being', or 'such an action runs counter to the Power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness'.

The Guardian reviewer next asserts that the 'living and personal God' postulated 'must needs have the power of working miracles,' and cites in support, curiously enough, some conclusions of Jean Jacques Rousseau and of John Stuart Mill on the subject. (J S Mill's contribution, it must be admitted, is in terms of logic, rather than evidence.) The miracle of the Resurrection of Christ is cited as a preeminent example of one that has 'actually happened', and Arnold is taken to

task for his disbelief - for asserting that 'the human mind is assuredly passing away, however slowly, from this hold of reliance...and those who make it their stay will more and more ^{feel themselves} disturbed, shaken, distressed and bewildered. (Super VI, p.245) To prove that The Guardian's stay is not shaken in this respect a number of books are recommended on the subject, though doubts are expressed that the author of Literature and Dogma will benefit much by them:

His way is simply to toss his head, to assure us that a treatise of this sort is out of date, that it is at variance with the spirit of the age, and so forth.' (p.780)

In defence of prophecy as a proof of revelation further books are recommended, together with the assurance that 'the existence of the Septuagint version of the Pentateuch proves that before the coming of Christ there was a minute picture of the special woes Israel would suffer, if disobedient to God.' (p.780)

Moving on to Revelation, The Guardian reviewer describes Arnold's language on this score as 'supremely silly and absurd'. For Arnold, the difference between natural and revealed religion 'is not one of kind, only of degree'. ('If we are little concerned about it, we say it is natural, if much, we say it is revealed.') The 'real antithesis' (for Arnold) 'to natural and revealed alike, is invented, artificial...A system of theological notions about personality, essence, existence, consubstantiality, is artificial religion, and is the proper opposite of revealed; since it is a religion that comes forth in no one's consciousness, but is invented' (Super VI, p.195) Such a proposition inevitably offended The Guardian, pillar of orthodoxy; and the authority of Dr Newman is invoked in defence of Revelation: 'both Catholics and Protestants have written solid defences of revelation, of Christianity, and of dogma as such'; therefore the onus probandi lies with those who would prove 'the non-existence of revelation', (p.780). Arnold does not, of course, exactly want to prove 'the non-existence of revelation', but to considerably change its ground. For Arnold

revelation is 'the awakening to the consciousness' (my italics) of a significant natural truth; but he is anxious that the consciousness should be to a genuine truth, experimentally or experientially verifiable, rather than an abstract notion, (however enobling in intention) artificially invented by theological speculation. It is curious that in addition to Dr Newman The Guardian quotes J S Mill (as a non-Christian source of evidence) against Arnold. The reviewer agrees with Mill's statement that 'it is now acknowledged by nearly all the ablest writers on the subject that natural religion is the necessary basis of revealed; that the proofs of Christianity presuppose the being and the moral attributes of God (Logic, Book III, Chapter 24).' The first part of the proposition is clearly not in opposition in any way to Arnold's view; and the second part simply points to the logical relationship between the parts and the whole of Christian doctrine as extant. Mill is not concerned here with the evidence upon which an interpretation of either the parts or the whole depends.

Arnold's 'notion of evidence' is next attacked: 'Mr Arnold manifestly holds that discrepancies in detail are fatal to the truth of a testimony on the main point at issue,' says The Guardian reviewer. This is a view, however, that the author of Literature and Dogma expressly does not hold; although our interpretation of his viewpoint may vary according to our view of 'the main point at issue.' Arnold does indeed notice inconsistencies in the Gospel narratives:

Discrepancies (he writes) which we now labour with such honest pains and by such astonishing methods to explain away, - the voice at Paul's conversion, heard by the bystanders according to one account, not heard by them according to another; the Holy Dove at Christ's baptism, visible to John the Baptist in one narrative, in two others to Jesus himself, in another, finally, to all the people as well; the single blind man in one relation, growing into two blind men in another; the speaking with tongues, according to St Paul a sound without meaning, according to the Acts an intelligent and intelligible utterance - all this will be felt to require really no explanation at all, to explain itself, to be natural to the whole class of incidents to which miracles belong, and the inevitable result of the looseness with which the stories of them arise and are propagated.' (Super VI, p.256)

But because for Arnold, the stories of Bible (as other) miracles are essentially legendary, they are not for this reason to be dismissed out of hand; they are significant legends, profoundly indicative of the range of Jesus's concern for his fellow men and of the kind of spell that his personality weaved among his contemporaries. The Guardian, however, maintained that 'no court of justice' takes too nice an account of discrepancies of detail. 'On the contrary, a too exact accordance in details is constantly regarded with suspicion, as giving ground for fear that the witnesses may have been tampered with and suborned'. Apparently the reviewer failed to notice that Arnold had made this very same point:

The good faith of the Bible writers is above all question, it speaks for itself; and the very same criticism which shows us the defects of their exegesis and of their demonstrations from miracles, establishes their good faith. But this could not, and did not, prevent them from arguing in the methods by which everyone around them argued, and from expecting miracles where everybody else expected them.' (Super VI, p.254)

Among discrepancies of argument Arnold discusses what he believes to be an error of interpretation by St Paul about what Abraham intended by the word 'seed' (Super VI, p.252). Without here going into details of Arnold's argument, it is important to quote his concluding comment:

'This is a good instance to take' (he says) 'because the Apostle's substantial doctrine is here not at all concerned. As to the root of the matter in question, we are all at one with St Paul (my italics) But it is evident how he could, like the rest of us, bring forward a quite false argument in support of a quite true thesis.' (Super VI, p.252)

It seems then that Arnold by no means maintains that 'discrepancies in detail are fatal to the truth of a testimony on the main point at issue.' (Unless, as was perhaps the case with The Guardian reviewer, the 'main point at issue' is the maintainance of belief in miracles?)

'Mr Arnold's book puts the Church entirely on one side,' continues The Guardian, 'and this is one more reason for the deep distrust with which we regard it from the first page to the last' (pp.780-781). But far from wishing to dismiss the Church, a conservative streak in Arnold

made him something of a champion of the established Church against both dissenters and secularists; what Arnold objected to was 'the pseudo-science of Church-dogma', its anachronistic teaching. Because The Guardian would have the Church's teaching accepted undisputed, the reviewer comments somewhat peevishly on Arnold: 'If his own breast is the sole source of light, then assuredly the teaching of Christ's Church is unneeded. But there are those, and they may be counted by millions (some of them are perhaps as clever as Mr Arnold) who are not satisfied with this inward light...(p.780).'

The Church embodies 'Christian orthodoxy on the fundamentals of the faith'; therefore for The Guardian reviewer 'as might be expected, on no point are the differences between us and Mr Arnold more radical and profound than on...the subject of dogma (p.781).' Arnold's 'contempt', 'scepticism', 'heresy' are unforgivable. John Henry Newman is again cited in defence of the establishment:

I have changed in many things; in this I have not. From the age of fifteen dogma has been the fundamental principle of my religion. I know no other religion; I cannot enter into the idea of any other sort of religion; religion as a mere sentiment is to me a dream and a mockery...(Apolgia pro Vita sua, p.120)'

The question of how 'sentiment' attaches to dogma, to an institution, to a series of principles, or to a loved or respected personage is not entered into in this quotation, nor in the reviewer's subsequent discussion; but the implication, presumably, is that Arnold, eschewing dogmatic religion, must hold to 'mere sentiment', and thus to 'a dream and a mockery.'

But The Guardian continues, Arnold is not entirely without dogma; hasn't he created his own? 'Righteousness tendeth to life' is itself dogma, in connection with which there are those 'who may well ask for additional elucidations and proofs.' (What is righteousness?' 'What is life?' 'Which life?' et cetera) And if Arnold's dogma 'righteousness tendeth to life' is 'a real moral law' doesn't it imply a personal lawgiver? In failing to accept this, apparently Arnold has

'thrown in his lot with the sceptics'.

Literature and Dogma has for The Guardian one saving grace, however: '...proceeding from the pen of so clear and gifted a writer as Mr Arnold' its readers 'at least know what it is that they have to meet.' Arnold 'really knows what he holds and what he rejects, and can in either case assign grounds for the positions he takes up.' If 'his outspokenness is at times painful', it is at least lucid. Arnold's 'patronising tone', his 'contempt' for authority, and his indecorous reference to 'an aged philanthropic nobleman' (clearly Lord Shaftesbury) (see below, chapter 6, p. 169) in 'the vilest of vile taste' savour little of 'sweetness and light'; but 'with all its grave and serious faults' Literature and Dogma 'may, we suppose, be credited with good intentions,' concludes The Guardian, but fortunately, in all probability, it 'will be little read.'

The Guardian's critique of Literature and Dogma has been detailed at some length because it represents a very significant body of opinion; and not only of opinion, but of real power in the State wielded between the established Church and the Law. To deny the existence of the Deity or the providence of God could in law be counted as blasphemy, and anyone who propagated atheism stood in danger of severe penalties through imprisonment or restriction of rights (See chapter 8, p. 210) Arnold was not professing atheism, still less propagating it; but his thesis was open to a wide variety of interpretation - depending upon the prejudices and preconceptions of the reader - and for a responsible educationist, one of the Senior Inspectors of Schools, to venture into this field was not without its dangers. The force of The Guardian's strictures, therefore, must be estimated by reference to the social context of the time; just as 'Arnold really knows...what he rejects' The Guardian's reviewer 'really knows what he is guarding.'

Reinforcements

The Quarterly Review (1874) similarly makes perfectly clear its standpoint as guardian of the status quo; but detailed criticism of

Literature and Dogma is less easy to sort out because its critique of this work is interwoven with criticisms of six other essays*, two by Arnold, two by Carlyle, one by Symonds and one by Pater.

The standpoint of the article can best be gleaned by quotation from its peroration:

Great action in the sphere of art and letters is encouraged, where men are content to take for granted the first principles on which human society depends. It becomes impossible only when they spend all their intellectual energies on analysis, in the idle endeavor to solve questions which are by nature incapable of proof.

To conclude, we desire a culture that shall be social, public, national, that shall be breathed from the common air, not elaborated out of the individual mind.' (p.414)

Freethinking and liberalism endanger society: men should 'perform the duties and maintain the dignity proper to their condition in society.'

(p.415); they should shun analysis and obey the laws:

Formed as they have been out of instincts and characteristics which have made society in England stable and free, the laws which enforce these virtues should not be questioned, but obeyed.' (p.415)

New-fangled appeals to 'Culture' glorify the individual at the expense of the nation.

...old fashioned Culture does not consist of constant self-analysis, perpetual depreciation of our fathers, everlasting glorification of ourselves; but at any rate it is the Culture which reared the men of Trafalgar and Waterloo!' (p.415)

The general drift of the argument presented in the Quarterly is that new English brands of Girondism (or sophisticated philosophical 'perfectionism') and Jacobinism (or self-willed revolutionary activism) are joining forces under the banner of Liberalism to undermine the British constitution, unseat the aristocracy and subvert Christianity and morals.

*The complete list is as follows:

1. Sartor Resartus. By Thomas Carlyle. Popular Edition. London, 1871
2. Latter-day Pamphlets. By the Same. Popular edition. London, 1871
3. Culture and Anarchy. By Matthew Arnold. D.C.L. London, 1870
4. Literature and Dogma. By the Same. London, 1873
5. St. Paul and Protestantism. By the Same. London, 1869
6. Studies of the Greek Poets. By J.A. Symonds, London, 1873
7. Essays on the Renaissance. By W H Pater. London, 1873

To every one who reflects it must be plain that society in England is now being exposed to a solvent like that which operated in France before the Revolution.' (p.391)

That solvent, identical to that which led to 'the final catastrophe of French history' is 'the perpetual wear and tear of reflection unrelieved by the opportunity of free action' which goes by the name of Liberalism. Liberalism is a 'religion based on self-worship, of which self-culture is the last and logical development.' (p.412) Therefore the self-appointed apostles of culture, such as Arnold, propagate a dangerous illusion.

The Quarterly reviewer, like that of The Guardian, takes the opportunity to restate the orthodox dogmatic position - 'a plain manly statement of Christianity' from the pen of Bishop Butler (pp.394-395) touching on 'a future state of rewards and punishments', original sin, 'Providence', 'miracles' and the 'Messiah'. But, the reviewer laments, this orthodox belief 'Mr Arnold says is a failure; the working classes will have nothing to say to it', and in a misguided attempt to 'suit Christianity to the working classes' he proposed to apply to it, 'the highly popular modern doctrine of Evolution.' (p.395) Evolution implies change, and change (especially in connection with the working classes) threatens the status quo; hence the disparaging tone of this reference to Darwin's theory. For declaring that 'each age...has its own conception of Christianity, that it has been steadily 'evolving' Arnold is accused of 'that petitio principii which we have seen to be such a frequent apparition in revolutionary logic.' But it is difficult to see what question he is here supposed to be begging. Arnold does not suggest that all the changes in the interpretation of Christianity through the ages have been universally advancing, nor that the contemporary mode of understanding it which he outlines is the culmination of all past modes, an ideal pattern of interpretation: he simply states that changes are inevitable, and that our interpretations must respond to the Spirit of the Age (the Zeitgeist) in which we find ourselves.

Since the spirit of 19th Century England was becoming steadily more and more 'scientific', arguments in defence of the Christian religion must take account of this fact. But the Quarterly objects to this:

Religion, we are told, must no longer be a matter of faith, based on revelation, the evidence for which is based merely on probability, but must be made a matter of science.' (p.397)

This, however, is a considerable oversimplification, and to that extent a misrepresentation, of Arnold's position. In the first place science was of less account for Arnold than literature; and the important thing was to recognize the essential poetry of religion. In the second, 'revelation', in Arnold's use of the term, is 'the awakening to the consciousness' of a significant natural truth (see p.107 above), and this individual 'consciousness' could constitute a more deeply felt form of 'faith' than that characterized by the suspension of personal judgement in favour of accepting the prepackaged judgement of others.* Thirdly, Arnold does not wish to make religion 'a matter of science' but to render religious language and concepts acceptable to the growing body of people whose thinking was seeped more and more in the principle of scientific verifiability which (made manifest in technical advances) was day by day tangibly transforming their environment.

Finally, in raising the question of the 'probability' of 'revelation' (whether as coming from Arnold or himself) the reviewer has moved onto shaky ground, for it makes very little difference whether an item of religious teaching is scientifically verifiable or not if it appears to a growing number of people to be highly improbable; and it was Arnold's contention that this essentially was what was happening. There was no shortage of apologists to explain away the 'problems' and 'difficulties' arising from the clash of traditional doctrine with scientific innovation; but their credibility was weakening as their task grew out of all proportion; and it seemed wiser to shift the ground (though not the significance) of the doctrine.

*(also Super VI, pp312-313)

But the Quarterly goes on to ask some very pertinent questions about Arnold's notion of 'verifiability'. Quoting from Literature and Dogma a passage where Arnold links his definition of God as 'an enduring power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness' with the proposition that 'we can verify by experience' that 'Jesus is the Son of God' because 'He gives the method and secret by which alone righteousness is possible', the reviewer asks:

How can it be verified that there is 'an enduring power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness'? Clearly this question is one of metaphysics. The origin of the moral perception in man is assigned by some to intuition, by others to education, and ^{by} Mr Darwin to social instinct, arising out of evolution and inheritance. Whichever conclusion a man accepts, it is plain that he must satisfy himself with reasoning which amounts to no more than probability. How, again, can it be verified that righteousness is alone possible by the method of Jesus?' (p.397)

It seems that in relation to both questions posed here, Arnold has extended the notion of 'verifiability through experience' untenably; 'begging the question' to suit his argument. We may feel that a 'power beyond ourselves...makes for righteousness' and cite examples in evidence that 'a power beyond ourselves makes for corruption and chaos'; and which of the two powers proposed is more 'enduring' would be beyond the timespan of accumulated experience to prove. Similarly different parties could argue from selected instances whether 'righteousness' (suitably defined) is attainable solely by the method and secret of Jesus, or by other methods, and neither could prove his contention, though each may feel strongly in favour of his position. These are, of course, matters of feeling, opinion, or faith. However, fuller discussion of 'experience' and the verifiability of facts must be reserved for a later chapter (see Chapter 10, pp.274-9).

Arnold's occasional tendency to overstatement is more than matched by that of his reviewer in the Quarterly, who goes on to describe Arnold as 'a philosopher who maintains that the whole fabric of historical Christianity is based on a delusion' (p.397), by which he means that Matthew Arnold does not believe in miracles. He censures him for questioning the evidence for the physical Resurrection of Christ 'the

cardinal point of Christian theology' and interpreting the accounts in a purely metaphorical sense. And he complains that Arnold fails to meet the challenge of human conflict implied in St Paul's saying, 'When I would do good evil is present with me.'

What distinguishes Christianity from philosophy (declares the Quarterly) is its recognition of the truth that fact must be met with fact, that the radical imperfection of the human will can only be cured by the supervention of a perfect and Divine Power. (p.399)

The reviewer here implies that 'the supervention of a perfect and Divine Power' is as much a 'fact' as is the 'radical imperfection of the human will.' Without becoming involved here with the question how far the imperfection of the human will is 'radical', it is clearly easier to be sure about the existence of human shortcomings than of their 'cure' announced here with such assurance. The cure may be desirable; but its assertion as a demonstrable 'fact' savours of wishful-thinking. The reviewer fails to recognize his own assumptions.

Although the Quarterly wholeheartedly opposes Arnold's liberal philosophy, it has a sneaking respect for his style, regarding the author of Literature and Dogma as 'the most polished writer of the day'.

...if any man could found a gospel on refinement it would be Mr Arnold. Graceful and humane in his temperament, a master alike of literature and style, capable of receiving criticism with temper, and retorting it with wit, this true disciple of Goethe has received from Fortune every gift, except the power 'to see himself as others see him.' (p.394)

And this last-mentioned shortcoming predictably appears to the reviewer at its worst in Arnold's characterization 'of the doctrine of the Trinity as "a fairy tale of the three Lord Shaftesburys" ' (Super VI, p.375).

Whether the Quarterly is the more shocked on behalf of the living peer or the abstract doctrine of the Trinity it is difficult to be sure; but the reviewer does not miss the opportunity of making capital out of Arnold's 'impropriety':

Would he not...have perceived that to jest on a matter which, to nine-tenths of his countrymen, is a matter of religious belief places him for a time on a level with one whom he does not particularly admire, namely, Mr Bradlaugh? (p.407)

And, from the Quarterly, what condemnation could be heavier than that!

The tenor of the criticism in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine (1873) can be deduced from the title of the article presenting it: 'Amateur Theology: Arnold's Literature and Dogma'. The first three and a half pages of this fifteen page critique are devoted to melancholy reflections on the contemporary spate of 'amateur' incursions into theology - 'which used to be supposed the highest and most difficult of all' departments of knowledge. 'Pseudo-thinkers' engage with 'flimsy confidence and superficial dilettanteism which passes with many for philosophy and theology' in the study of 'Holy Scriptures' and 'traditional dogma'. Our complaint is, not that theology is undergoing, as it must undergo, great modifications of its accumulated opinions and traditions, but that its old opinions are frequently set aside as valueless by those who have never studied them...' (p.680)

For Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, Literature and Dogma is really only 'a large pamphlet directed in great part against the bishops of the Church of England, particularly the Bishops of Winchester and Gloucester' (p.681). Its style is perhaps the greatest source of indignation to the reviewer who finds it 'constantly mantling' with 'irrepressible scorn' and dreary "chaff"; impertinent with 'such merely vulgar profanity as to shock every true and right instinct' (p.682), especially in its presentation of the Trinity as the 'three Lord Shaftesburys' (Super VI, p.375)

It cannot advance the conception of religion to have any of its doctrines, and especially one which has so powerfully swayed many devout minds, presented under images of ludicrous ineptitude' (p.682)

In a curious and interesting way this reviewer equates the author of Literature and Dogma with the 'Zeitgeist' itself. Arnold thought of himself as living in it, subject to it and needing to adapt to it; his critic sees Arnold as creating and promoting it:

Do not (the great articles of the Christian faith) still witness to a far grander spirit than this "Zeit-Geist", or modern spirit of which we hear so much, but whose main ambition seems to be to insult or disparage all that has gone before it?

Can anything be more unscientific than such a spirit? It is the very apotheosis of self-opinion intoxicated by its own pride, and flaunting its dogmatisms with a crude audacity in the face of preceding dogmas.' (p.692)

Despite its hostility, this critique honours Arnold with a good deal of direct quotation and takes his arguments seriously. It seeks to refute them on three basic grounds: (1) that religious facts are not susceptible to scientific verification ('religious truth' is not 'to be tested by experiments as that by which we prove that fire burns...this is not the order of religious certitude...it seizes (men) ...as a living awe, a conscious presence haunting them.' (p.688)); (2) that moral truths are outside the province of science, the laws of conduct can be confirmed by conscience, but not proved experimentally ('facts, and the order in which these facts recur, are all that science can know in a strictly scientific manner. We have really no right to interpret nature or life so far as to include in them the idea of power - still less of a Power making for righteousness' (p.690)); and (3) that Dogma, far from being 'a mere excrescence or disease of religion' profoundly recognizes 'the necessities of our spiritual nature' and embodies 'the realities of Revelation' ('The creeds of Christendom have been the fruit of...study and experience. The labours of dogmatic theologians have sought to organize the highest ideas of the Church from age to age.' (p.692)). The critique also makes out a case for the Hebrew religion having acknowledged a personal God before conceiving the Deity as 'a power for righteousness' (p.686) - the reverse of Arnold's contention.

Two significant criticisms should perhaps be levelled at the critique in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine. The first relates to human thought, and the modern critics' attitude of disrespectful criticism towards traditional wisdom:

With all our increased knowledge and more exact canons of verification, the capacity of human thought varies but slightly from age to age (the reviewer writes). It may be fairly questioned, indeed, whether the power of the brain, in individual cases, retains its old level with the wider diffusion of intellectual culture. (pp680-681)

Arnold, of course, said nothing about the capacity of human thought varying from age to age, but simply recognized that the forms in which our thought is couched must necessarily be modified as our experience and

environment change. The second, and perhaps more serious, shortcoming of this reviewer is his total failure to understand Arnold's view of poetry, since this is practically the mainstay upon which the whole thesis of Literature and Dogma relies. 'The language of Scripture is everywhere...a mere poetical adaption'* (says the reviewer); the conception of the personality of God is, for Arnold (he continues) 'a mere poetic accretion'*; but 'it was plainly a very real and true idea, and no mere poetical imagination* to the mind of Hebrew Psalmists and Prophet,' and the 23rd Psalm is quoted in evidence (p.686) It is strange that the reviewer failed to notice that both the Old Testament psalmist, David, and the contemporary Matthew Arnold were themselves poets! Could either of them have thought in terms of 'mere poetry'? Further on the reviewer writes 'it is of the very nature of religion to appeal to a religious sense - as of poetry to a poetic sense..or music to a harmonic sense.' (p.689). Arnold, whose estimation of poetry was of the highest (see pp.181-2) was clearly concerned to bring out the essential relation between religion and poetry. If for Arnold religion is 'morality touched by emotion' (Super VI, p.176) the source and nourishment of its emotive content derives largely from the poetry of the Scriptures. The reviewer need not have agreed with this point of view, but it is unfortunate that he failed to acknowledge it.

Almost as critical of Literature and Dogma as the foregoing reviews is that in The Saturday Review (1873), but the reader may sense a kind of grim appreciation of Arnold's achievement even amidst the notes of censure that the duty of orthodoxy demands. Certainly Arnold's style is appreciated: 'he has clear views on religious subjects, and is able to give them ingenious and lucid expression' (p.284). And again,

He writes the best of all prose, the prose of a poet. His sentences follow with the utmost freedom the mould of his thought; he repeats himself continually, but with variations like those of a skilful musician on a familiar air, and he avoids dulness with instinctive felicity.' (p.286)

* (my italics)

Inevitably Arnold's indiscretion over the 'Three Lord Shaftesburys' is taken to task and the reviewer looks askance at his mocking treatment of the Bishops of Winchester and Gloucester. But here one may sense a touch of veiled sympathy for Arnold's point of view in the critic's words:

The Bishops in question, we all know, are not specially remarkable as metaphysicians. The Bishop of Winchester, though quite capable of handling abstractions, generally takes things in the concrete, and is never so felicitous as when dealing directly with men. The Bishop of Gloucester is best known to students as an exact and patient verbal critic, who is slow to sacrifice the literal meaning of the text to generalizations of any kind whatever. Mr Arnold would be obliged to respect these prelates if he described them as they are; but he describes them as they are not, and laughs at them' (p.286)

This critic pays careful attention to Arnold's subject-matter, giving a careful and helpful summary of the contents of Literature and Dogma before proceeding to ask his fundamental question of the author:

We naturally wish to know whether Mr Arnold thinks that Jesus was the Christ - the Messiah for whom, as time went on, the Jewish people learned to look with increasing fulness of expectation.' (p.285)

The reviewer is disappointed here, however, for 'on Mr Arnold's principles, theology is or ought to be, a branch of literature' (p.284).

Consequently,

If we desire, as we very reasonably may, to learn from the New Testament something distinct about the personage who is its principle subject, or about the teaching which is desired from him as from its spring and centre, Mr Arnold has little or nothing to offer except doubts and negations.' (p.285)

Disappointingly for the reviewer Literature and Dogma leaves little scope for 'religious speculation' - an observation that must have more than satisfied Arnold, who (as his critic rightly observes) preferred wide reading to narrow specialization.

He is impartial in his suspicion of specialists and is prepared to defend the claims of literature not only against theologians but against the advocates of physical science. It is painful to think of the consequences which may ensue in a few years if Matthew Arnold, with his delicate intellectual organization, is forced into rude contact with those unsparing inquirers who put such direct questions both to matter and men.' (p. 286)

It is ironical, in respect of the last jibe, to note the strong friendship and mutual appreciation of each other's works that developed between

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between Matthew Arnold and Thomas Huxley during the decade following this observation (see pp. 22^{and 192}).

Anxiety and ambivalence

The Spectator produced two separate notices on Literature and Dogma in two consecutive weeks (Feb., March, 1873). The overall impression to be derived from these two reviews is that their author was rather critical, very puzzled and somewhat saddened by Literature and Dogma. A curious ambivalence runs through the first article. Arnold has written a 'singular volume'; but if its interpretation of the Bible is true, 'it presents, for us at least, a new gospel'; if its interpretation is untenable it strikes 'a new and heavy blow at the Bible'. The style is superb ('reminding us, both in its wording and its liquid rhythms, of many a passage in Father Newman'); but some of the allusions are 'completely unworthy of the apostle of sweetness and light' (p.243), ('showing something of the cruel scorn of Voltaire'). 'The author has a profound sympathy with the Bible, astoundingly his criticism may subliminate and evaporate its contents till, to every eye but his own, only the ghost is left' (p.243). 'So difficult is it to follow this great eulogist of simplicity' that all in all 'we confess to being a good deal at a loss' (p.243).

The critic's main anxiety relates to the personality of God, and the implications of this for Christian prayer:

Either prayer involves the belief in God as one who hears and answers us...or it is of the nature of a mere poetic apostrophe, an exercise of the imagination about a subject of deep interest to ourselves, and nothing more.' (p.244)

The 'either-or' formulation of this question clearly oversimplifies a situation which^{is} by its nature very complex: the number of different kinds and qualities of 'prayer' exercised by the variety of humankind must be legion - they certainly cannot be resolved into two kinds as the critic suggests. Nevertheless he draws attention to what must for many Christians be a source of unquiet - the abstract nature of Arnold's definition of God:

Just substitute for a moment in any prayer...Mr Arnold's neuter definition of what the verifiable essence of God is..."Have mercy upon me, o stream of tendency that makes for righteousness! according to thy lovingkindness...(etc)..." (p.244)

However, elsewhere he berates Arnold for using 'the personal pronoun at all' (as in 'God is an influence, and those who would serve Him (*my italics*) must serve Him not by any form of words or rites, but by inward motion and in reality.'). He feels that to call an abstract influence 'him' is inconsistent. But this criticism overlooks the inevitable distinction between a definition and a private mode of address to a power 'beyond ourselves'. The more orthodox definition of God, for example, (which he approves) does not fit very much more happily into prayer: 'O "great Personal First Cause, the moral and intelligent Governor of the universe" hallowed be thy name...(etc)...' The point Arnold is making is the need to make such definitions as we have to make approximate more nearly to what can be verified by experience; and his definition, whatever its faults, does not seek to 'place' the deity with all the appearance - but only the appearance, because unverifiable, of scientific exactness.

The second Spectator notice (March 1873) takes up the same point - the personality of God - and professes to remain 'profoundly bewildered' by Arnold's dismissal of metaphysics in favour of poetry. How can the Christian word 'Father' be used of a mere 'tendency', a kind of 'Muse of Righteousness'? Arnold, in Literature and Dogma,

...seems to bring us back, by the help of a false passport made out under the name of 'Emotion', all that he was going to banish under the name of 'Metaphysics', and to take full credit both for the decree of exile and the evasion of that decree by which he defeats its whole meaning and drift.' (p.278)

This is quite a valid point, but it reveals clearly the failure of the critic to understand Arnold's intentions. For Arnold the subjective element in religion is what counts for most, hence his stress on the 'inwardness' of Christianity. Metaphysics give an illusion of objectivity; but the overt framework thus created cannot stand up against the genuine verifiable objectivity of science whenever the two models come into

conflict, so for Arnold 'Emotion' and the poetry that expresses and nourishes emotion can provide a safer basis for religion than can metaphysics. When he speaks of an 'influence' or 'steam of tendency, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness' Arnold feels he does not offend the world of the scientist (which he shares with him); but in prayer, which is necessarily subjective, the word 'Father' is a more natural expression of the emotion involved.

The second objection in this critique is to Arnold's use of the word 'faith'. For the reviewer faith cannot be 'a mere self-contained inward act, but has reference to a will outside the mind of the believer, in whose breast the executive power which is to verify the faith, lies' (p.279). Whether this critic was conscious of the anthropomorphism in his use of the term 'breast' in this context (i.e. whether he regarded the expression as one of science or poetry) it is hard to know; but unlike Arnold his view of faith clearly demands the suspension of personal judgement and a resting in a judgment 'higher' than that of any individual. The reviewer agrees with Dr Newman that 'Faith is, in its very nature, the acceptance of what our reason cannot reach, simply and absolutely upon testimony,' a position which Arnold refutes in

Literature and Dogma:

But surely faith is...nothing of the kind...instead of being a submission of the reason to what puzzles it, (faith) is rather a recognition of what is perfectly clear, if we will attend to it.' (Super VI, pp.312-312)

For the reviewer it is the mystery of the unknown that provides the motivespring for faith; for Arnold it is the certainty of the known.

Finally, it is Arnold's treatment of 'repentance' (metanoia), or the 'method' of Jesus, that comes in for criticism. In describing the method (writes the reviewer):

Mr Arnold forgets to state that 'forgiveness' was the master-key which led to 'change of heart,' and that forgiveness implies a living being to whom a prayer for forgiveness can be addressed.' (p.279)

Arnold would dispute the implication referred to here (the need for a 'magnified non-natural man' to be available to bestow forgiveness); but

he does have something to say on the subject of forgiveness. It is true that Arnold has little sympathy with the Protestant doctrines of the Atonement (through the 'precious blood of Christ') (Super VI, p.356) or of Justification (ibid., p.360) (defined by J S Whale (1957) as meaning that 'through Christ's sacrifice on the Cross God calls sinful men into fellowship with himself'). Forgiveness through these means, by a God who would intentionally manipulate his creatures in this manner is repugnant to Arnold. However, on the one hand he recognizes forgiveness as an essential element in Jesus's healing activity (Super VI, p.255); and on the other hand he adopts an interpretation of the meaning of the Gospels by which the need for forgiveness can be largely obviated. By 'restoring the intuition' (Super VI, p.285), says Arnold, Jesus taught the means to an immediate sense of peace attuned to 'the way of the Eternal'; through 'Metanoia' (self-knowledge and repentance (Super VI, p.289) - 'a life-giving change of the inner man' - the corrosive guilt that necessitates forgiveness could be cleansed and a kind of grace achieved. True consciousness, or conscience properly understood, can banish the need either for 'punishment' or 'forgiveness':

...punishment, government, and society, are all of them after-inventions; creations of assemblages of men, and not matter of the individual's intuition. Jesus regarded simply what was primary, - the individual and the intuition. And in truth, if the individual and the intuition are once reached, the after-inventions may be left to take care of themselves. And if conscience ever became enough of a power, there would be no offenders to punish. This is the true line of religion; it was the line of Jesus. To work the renovation needed, he concentrated his efforts upon a method of inwardness, of taking counsel of conscience. (Super VI, pp.290-291)

Before considering some criticisms of Literature and Dogma expressed in a somewhat different vein, a further point needs to be made about the criticisms in the five periodicals so far examined; and that is their relevance to the concept of 'education as initiation'. In all five, and particularly perhaps in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine (1873), we see the effect of mental training based on a priori principles and directed towards the apprehension of, and submersion in, a fixed, shared body of

knowledge. Theological training (as do other branches of knowledge) demands 'long and laborious culture' (p.678). True thinkers are 'men who patiently go to the roots of questions in the light, not of their own fancy, but of all preceding knowledge' (p.679)

If no doctrines, however venerable, are entitled to acceptance merely because they are old, it is yet the business of the student to trace and acknowledge the true conditions of thought or faith out of which they grew, and the genuine elements of knowledge which they embrace, against the errors of their time. The study of dogma pursued in this manner, becomes a study which at once illuminates the past and guides the present. It is ^{the} best corrective of extravagant theory and self-confidence' (p.681)

Without denying the obvious virtues in this statement, one is also left with the sneaking anxiety that total submersion in a discipline in this way might also be 'the best corrective' to any kind of waywardness in thought - the means of guarding against the 'extravagant theory' of a Galileo, a Darwin or an Einstein.*

Interestingly enough, this reviewer unconsciously reveals the very danger to which the process he is advocating is most susceptible: the problem of creating 'two cultures' based on separate, compartmentalized disciplines:

There is less to be said perhaps for some of our (pseudo-) theological teachers (he writes) than even for our rashest theorists in science; for the latter are at least primarily dealing with what they have carefully studied and understood. If Mr Darwin's halting logic and misconceptions of the nature of inference cast ridicule on some of his conclusions, he is thoroughly at home in the field of natural observation and in those crowds of facts which he seldom fails to marshal with accuracy however inconclusively he may interpret them. He and others have a genuine scientific training, and they fail only

*At its worst the principle of saturation in a single discipline could give rise to a Mr Casaubon, the archetypal pedant in George Eliot's Middlemarch (1965), a man 'capable of severe self-restraint', 'resolute in...honour according to the code; ...unimpeachable by any recognized opinion', for whom 'the difficulty of making his Key to all Mythologies unimpeachable weighed like lead upon his mind.' In Mr Casaubon, regrettably, 'such capacity of thought and feeling as had ever been stimulated in him by the general life of mankind had long shrunk to a sort of dried preparation, a lifeless embalment of knowledge' for he was 'living in a lumber-room...furbishing up broken-legged theories.' Mr Casaubon's learning, in short, (as one of the other characters is made to express it) was 'a kind of damp which might in due time saturate a neighbouring body'. But perhaps Mr Casaubon is an extreme case.

when they leave their proper domain, and traverse a region of argument for which they have no training... (p.679)

Discussion of this problem must be deferred to a later chapter (chapter 12); for the present it must suffice to state the dilemma for education implicit in the critiques of Literature and Dogma so far discussed.

How far, we need to ask, does an education conceived of as initiation into traditional disciplines, militate against creative insight and flexible understanding; is there perhaps an inverse relationship between 'solid scholarship' in traditional terms and the capacity to adapt to new forms of thought and unforeseen environmental challenges?

Progressive objections

With the Fortnightly Review (1873) we enter a different domain in the criticism of Literature and Dogma. A focus of Liberal-Rational and positivist opinion, the Fortnightly had achieved a wide circulation (about 25,000) by 1873, and included among its contributors Thomas Huxley, George Eliot, William Morris, Frederick Harrison, and occasionally even Arnold himself. But ⁱⁿ its criticisms of Literature and Dogma, the Fortnightly felt that Arnold was not being progressive enough:

...the best praise of the wide and various culture (Arnold) recommends is to be found in the fact that it has brought a critic of rare tact and fine perception to practical conclusions scarcely distinguishable from those of his best adversaries.' (p.543)

The work may contain much that is 'good and true' but it still has 'a bias too decided to be compatible with the half-sceptical reservations, the laborious many-sidedness, which are the essence of culture.' In other words, Arnold still steers too close to traditional, orthodox religion on the one hand, while on the other his critical approach, based on 'Culture', is too tentative and diffuse, and lacks the firm grip of scientific analysis.

This critic appreciates Arnold's placing of the notion of the moral 'not ourselves' in subjective experience since 'the only satisfactory proof of the existence of a moral Not I must be, like the evidence of the senses to a material world, the consciousness of effects, of which, to the best of our belief, we are not ourselves the cause' (p.543).

This 'consciousness', however, the Fortnightly wants to make clear is not universally shared:

If every one were liable to feel an influence from without (my italics) strengthening and directing the conscience, there would be no atheists...! (p.543).

Arnold's bias takes the form of 'Hebraizing' when he tackles external realities and looks for "God in History": the assumption of a righteous power may nourish the inner man, but its existence cannot be proved by external evidence:

...an extra-natural power for righteousness might preserve Hellas by giving the Greeks conduct, but cannot be inferred from the fact that, failing conduct, Greece fell. (p.544)

The only fault with this succinctly expressed criticism of Arnold's presentation of God in history is the critic's use of the expression 'extra-natural'; since it imputes to Arnold the assumption of a dimension he would not have acknowledged.

In the Fortnightly, at last, however, we find a critic who appreciates Arnold's 'Three Lord Shaftesburys' (Super VI, p.375). 'We cannot but think,' he writes, 'the author has been misconceived, through a certain dulness of literary perception, such as he condemns in theologians generally.' (p.544). The reviewer would doubtless like to go a good deal further than Arnold in condemnation of theologians for he implies in his conclusion that Literature and Dogma falls between two stools:

...it hardly seems that the case is made out for the universal substitution of literature for science and doctrine, (p.544),

however 'attractive' Arnold's method may appear.

The radical Examiner (1873), in an article entitled 'The Creed of Culture', examining Literature and Dogma with some care, and scrupulous attention to detail, concludes that,

The volume is in substance an excellent one, and the friends of free thought cannot be too thankful for the support that Mr Arnold gives to their work. But they will hardly agree with its main purpose; which is to draw from the Bible a new theology that, though it may be vastly better than the orthodox sorts of theology, is nevertheless a

theology based on something more than the clear, practical laws of duty.' (p.229)

Christian puritanism can be seen here to have passed into secular puritanism, a theme which, as we will see, the writer pursues with a vengeance.

The 'pith' of Arnold's book he sums up in the Old Testament phrase 'Hear O Israel! The Eternal is our God, the Eternal alone' and Arnold's related 'creed of culture': 'Do righteousness, and let the doing of it be your whole and only worship.' Thus far the reviewer approved the emphasis of Literature and Dogma; but Arnold's conception of religion as 'morality touched by emotion' he would prefer to categorize as 'morality tainted by selfishness' (p.228), for in stressing the joy and satisfaction to be derived from right action Arnold has put the emphasis on spurious rewards which have no place in true morality:

As soon as we allow the abstract rule of right, the true utilitarianism, to be affected by personal consideration, by the spurious thing that often goes by the name of utilitarianism, a loophole is provided for all sorts of mischievous doctrines. And, generally, if to reason, which prescribes the maxims of ethics, we super-add any unreasonable outcome of emotion, we may be sure that our ethics will be deteriorated. If religion is anything more than morality, it is inferior to it.' (p.228)

This is a severe doctrine. But the reviewer is again with Arnold in his 'heartily and honestly condemning the "Aberglaube" which brought Judaism to such a pass that Christ was needed to reform it, and which then reduced Christianity to the state in which we now see it.' (p.228)

The Examiner notices with interest the distinction Arnold draws between the forgiveable (though false) 'popular science of religion' and 'the theology of the learned' for which 'Mr Arnold has no tenderness at all'; but would want to go further than Arnold in the total condemnation of all theology, and of religious notions which could give rise to theological speculation:

Unfortunately (Arnold) is not content to take his readers into the clear and boundless atmosphere of free thought, but he leads them out of the thick fogs of conventional religion into a place, where though it may be refined, and almost impalpable at first, there is still a god that may be the nucleus of miasmata as dense and unwholesome as those from which he would 'liberate us.' (p.229)

Muted praise

The Westminster Review (1873), a serious radical and progressive periodical, devotes a very favourable critique to Literature and Dogma, consisting of a succinct epitome of the work and a brief commentary.

The book is calculated to do more good than the officious Convocation speeches and writings of the entire clergy. It is an excellent antidote to their mischievous identifications of religion with absurd dogmas. (p.559)

It 'breathes a healthy spirit...carries the reader along with it, and is substantially correct.'

Some minor criticisms, however, are made in respect of Arnold's assignations of authorship and datings of certain books of the Bible - and the reviewer objects to Arnold's style - especially to his elevation of words and phrases to 'a sort of talismanic dignity', and to his repetition and diffuseness. But in his analysis and interpretation of the Old and New Testaments; his exposure of 'pretentious language' about it used by theologians; and his putting the Bible on 'a real experimental basis...imperatively needed at ^{the} present time,' Arnold ...shows an excellent critical faculty, and emancipates himself from the traditional opinions that disfigure the Bible and alienate many from its perusal.' (p.559)

As a sort of post-script to this assessment of Literature and Dogma the next issue of the Westminster Review (1873) includes a brief criticism of Arnold's notion of evidence. As Henry Dunn (1873) had pointed out, Arnold's 'Eternal not-ourselves, making for righteousness' and the exclusive identification of Jesus with this power are really no more scientifically verifiable than the more orthodox notion of 'God as a Person, One who thinks and loves.' 'It cannot be denied', writes this reviewer,

that as experience, in the only sense it can have in relation to such matters, is a species of personal intuition or feeling, that as far as absolute verification goes one man's experience is about as good as another's and not better.' (p.454)

Leaving aside for the moment the reductionism implicit in this last clause, it is clear that the critic has justly picked on a weak point in

Arnold's argument: Arnold's version of the deity may be closer to what experience can verify than that of his theological rivals, but it is still beyond the reach of scientific proof.

The readership of the Athenaeum (1873) included the Mechanics Institutes and readers of the publications of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful knowledge; an independent, progressive periodical supporting all forms of popular education, it had a circulation of some 18,000. Its response to Literature and Dogma is therefore of some significance as a gauge of the likely popularity of Arnold's conception. In its close analysis of Literature and Dogma the Athenaeum is careful to retain, as far as possible 'ipsissima verba' of the author, ...not only because we are anxious to do him full justice, but also because we wish to avoid even the suspicion of discussing a theory which it is not our business either to endorse or to controvert.' (p.239)

The readers are left largely 'to make up their own minds upon the serious questions raised'; but the critic's detachment is not total. He objects to the 'three Lord Shaftesburys' and Arnold's style - particularly his repetition of favourite formulae 'in all possible combinations'; but he thanks Arnold 'for the frankness with which he has explained his views, and for the care which he has taken to express them perspicuously', and concludes:

We would earnestly recommend the book to the attention of our readers. Mr Arnold's writings are always pleasant reading, and if Literature and Dogma is somewhat bulky, it may be urged in its defence that we cannot have too much of a good thing.' (p.240)

Approbation

More surprising, perhaps, than the generally favourable response to Literature and Dogma shown by the last three periodicals mentioned (The Examiner, The Westminster Review and The Athenaeum), is the highly appreciative reaction in The Contemporary Review (1873), particularly as its orientation and influence were mainly religious rather than literary. In a 25-page article entitled 'Mr Matthew Arnold's New Religion of the

Bible', the reviewer, J Llewelyn Davies, presents a thorough analysis of Literature and Dogma accompanied throughout by a commentary which combines critical tact with genuine enthusiasm for Arnold's method and approach. The critic's very generous response to Arnold's thesis is the more noteworthy because he disagrees with Arnold on two fundamental points - namely, the significance of the doctrine of the Trinity and the physical Resurrection of Jesus, both of which he seeks to salvage.

He believes that 'most of his readers will feel' as he does that,

Few books...have ever more urgently challenged the attention of those who believe in the God and the Christ of Christendom. It is of no use to complain of the dangerousness of Mr Arnold's treatise. Its outspoken plainness marks it as the product of an age in which it is settled that, at whatever risk and with whatever consequences, all beliefs shall be openly called in question and searched and sifted without mercy. Whatever belief is to live, must live by the help of criticism, or, it may be in defiance of criticism, not by being carelessly shielded from it. And the very quality that chiefly makes this book dangerous, is one which must command our cordial respect. This is its earnest sympathy with Christianity. (p.855)

How does J Llewelyn Davies, from his relatively orthodox standpoint, cope with the 'challenge' presented by Literature and Dogma? After devoting substantial space to a faithful exposition of Arnold's thesis, he asks its author ('as a strict reasoner') two important questions:

1st, what he admits to be verifiable;
2ndly, whether it is reasonable to believe anything which cannot be verified by experiment? (p.856)

In answer to the first he finds, and approves, Arnold's contention that 'there is a tendency in things which makes for righteousness.' But having found this indisputable, he supports it somewhat dubiously perhaps:

Everyone believes that prosperity depends on morality, that honesty is the best policy, that in the long run, and for communities, immorality is unsuccessful. (p.856)

While accepting the second two propositions, the first smacks of the spirit commonly associated with Samuel Smiles (1859) and critically examined by R H Tawney (1922) in his Holland Memorial Lecture, 'Religion and the Rise of Capitalism'. The reviewer goes on, however, to distinguish Arnold's notion of virtue from that of the Utilitarians: 'Mr Arnold wants to enlist awe, emotion, enthusiasm, in aid of virtue, whereas the

philosophical Liberals in general have not felt strongly the need of these sentiments ' (p.856).

In connection with the enlistment of emotion, Llewelyn Davies argues a contradiction in Arnold's thesis, where we find on the one hand ridicule against regarding God as a 'Person', and on the other the source of Israel's 'awe' and 'devotion' to virtue is shown to derive from his anthropomorphism - 'He personified his Eternal.' The reviewer criticizes Arnold's suggestion that Israel extolled the Eternal as a result of 'his gratitude for righteousness', ('It would seem to us a mockery to talk of being grateful to conduct,' p.858): but he approves Arnold's explanation for the personifying language of Israel:

God is a father, because the power in and around us which makes for righteousness is, indeed, best described by the name of this authoritative, but yet tender and protecting relation. (Super VI, p.185)

There is no complaint made against the 'three Lord Shaftesburys' - Arnold's ridicule is taken in good part; instead the reviewer shows some satisfaction in demonstrating that if 'the fault of us who stand by the Apostle's Creed and the Lord's Prayer...is that we are anthropomorphic,' Arnold nevertheless 'justifies our anthropomorphism by the authority of Israel and Goethe ' (p.858).

In answer to his second question, whether 'it is reasonable to believe anything which cannot be verified by experiment' Llewelyn Davies appeals not to logic but to 'the nature of man' which is such that 'it is not reasonable to limit our belief absolutely, a priori, to that which can be tested by experiment.' If not as a scientifically verifiable entity, yet as a human conception answering a human need the 'Righteous Father' is 'adequately verified by experience, conscience, emotion and metaphysics combined ' (p.861). Moreover, he derives some support for this approach from Arnold's insistence that 'the language of the Bible is literary, not scientific language,' and in seeking to express a religious conception of some magnitude 'the language of science about it will be below what we feel to be the truth.'

Approval again is given to Arnold's faith in 'individualism' (p.863); but this critic has less faith than Arnold in 'the masses'; however, if 'only a few working men...are qualified to follow' Arnold's ideas, 'many more in the classes above them, will follow him with the keenest interest.' (p.846)

Finally, the Contemporary Review's critic agrees to differ amicably with Arnold on the question of miracles. He believes that 'without the Resurrection there would have been no Church, no Christianity' (p.865), and he must therefore find room for this in his overall conception. He resolves the problem as follows:

To accept supernatural pretensions on the ground of signs and wonders, is one thing: to feel it to be natural and satisfactory that the Son of God should do signs and wonders, is another thing. And the latter was, and is, the proper state of mind of the true disciple of Christ.' (p.864)

It might seem that after so much fundamental disagreement with Arnold this reviewer would be only too pleased to part company from him; but his conclusion is in the same generous spirit as his criticism throughout: We confess sadly how much our Christianity needs to be bettered, both in theory and in practice, and we welcome most thankfully the contributions which Mr Arnold has made - far more than I have been able to notice in this paper - towards the truer understanding of the teaching of the Bible. (p.866)

Summary and sequel

Obviously there is not space to include reference to all the contemporary reviews of Literature and Dogma; but it is hoped that some measure of the response to Arnold's work can be assessed from the representative sample selected. Certain key reactions can be summarised.

The establishment reviews in defence of orthodoxy tended to fear Arnold's contribution to liberal biblical criticism for a variety of reasons. Disrespect for the authority of established dogma brings with it a dangerous self-willed individualism corrosive alike to Faith and the moral basis of law. The human need for a personal God is not met by pantheism, 'scientific definition' of the deity, or the elevation of morality as the keystone of religion. Objections to miracle and prophecy

undermine the structure of, and endanger credence in, the Bible as a whole. 'Amateur' theology, ignorant of accumulated wisdom and specialist techniques, can only replace traditional dogma with inferior dogmas of its own.

Radical and progressive reviewers tended to fear Literature and Dogma as a rearguard action fought by Arnold on behalf of established Christianity, and therefore a danger to 'progress' and free thought. 'Culture', with its tentative, eclectic approach, lacked (they felt) the hard-headedness of either scientific experiment or doctrinal systemization, and tended to diffuseness of thought. Any link between religion and conduct would undermine the basis and obscure the clear-headedness of Utilitarian morality. If Arnold's 'new theology' caught on it could in time become as restrictive as the old.

Liberal Christian thinkers appreciated the challenge of Literature and Dogma because they felt the need for open criticism of religion and the Bible (along with all other phenomena) in a broadly 'scientific' age of transition. Arnold's acknowledgement of the virtue of 'awe' and 'emotion' in religious and moral matters could provide an antidote to the cold aridity of Utilitarian morality. Arnold's doctrine gave welcome support to the liberal view that room must be left for the individual conscience to interpret and evaluate religious and moral truths.

From both traditionalist and progressive reviewers came doubts (for different reasons) about Arnold's notion of 'evidence' and scientific verification - criticism partly, as has been seen, justified; and partly arising from failure to understand novel features of Arnold's approach, particularly in relation to his understanding of poetry and the distinction he would draw between evidence based on 'imaginative reason' and the scientific verification of external observable facts. On the whole it can be said that the orthodox critics had the greater admiration for Arnold's style (apart from his technique of ridiculing personalities in authority), and the progressive reviewers for his content: 'excellent in

substance, a 'healthy spirit...substantially correct', 'a good thing' which 'we would earnestly recommend', etcetera.

A significant omission from the contemporary critical scene might be noticed in the reviews dealt with above. 'The most important magazine of the latter half of the century was undoubtedly the Cornhill,' writes R G Cox (1964). Its editorial policy 'had a strict morality about accepting the best article offered, and not distributing charity at the expense of the cost of the magazine.' It was, however, in the Cornhill of course that the two essays constituting the basis of Literature and Dogma had been first published in July and October 1871, so that in this form the nucleus of Arnold's thesis had reached a substantial readership of some 20,000 before ever it was printed in book form.

Reaction to Literature and Dogma was not confined to the reviews. 'Its repute spread rapidly; wherever Arnold went on the Continent during the next four months, he found it the subject of conversation' (Super VI, p.451) and there was inevitably a great deal of correspondence about it. Alexander Macmillan wrote to Arnold (Buckler, 1958) on February 15, 1873:

I have read every word of your book on Literature and Dogma, and in general with great delight. Of course there are points on which I do not agree with you, but the whole aim and purpose I do agree with, and it is admirably clear throughout. I am calling everybody's attention to it that I see. Of course it will make a row, but I think it will do good.' (p.95)

Shortly afterwards Arnold wrote to Macmillan (ibid.):

I am glad you have been interested, and not offended, by 'Literature and Dogma'...but the book is sure to be much attacked and blamed. No one should suffer himself to exaggerate what can be done at one moment by one individual and one book: all I venture to say is that the so-called orthodox position cannot, I think, ever again be precisely the same in England after the publication of this book, that it has hitherto been. 'There is much to regret in giving forth a book of this kind: still it was inevitable that the blow to the received opinions should come, and it could hardly have come from any one who had a more sincere sympathy with the good which is at the bottom of these received opinions, and who was more anxious to preserve this. (6 March 1873) (p.96)

A letter from Alexander Macmillan's publishing partner, George Craik is of some interest in the light it throws on the stir which Arnold's book had caused:

I have read 'Literature and Dogma' with ^{as} great interest as any one, and that is not small - for the book has certainly created a very general interest and must have been largely read. We just bought an edition from Smith & Elder for the American market...It strikes me as it has struck many that you have fairly broken the back of man's prejudice, and that religious belief must now do without the prejudices, and religious faith be a very different matter. I fancy many of us were feeling for the same sort of thing as you have said for us all. You are attacked in various quarters, but there are better things said of the book than either the Saturday or the Spectator have dared to say - if not in print certainly in talk and by really capable men.' (Buckler, 1958, p.96)

In due course Arnold (no doubt encouraged by the general reaction his book had received) chose to reply to his critics - this time not in the Cornhill, but in the Contemporary Review. His essays in reply were later published as God and the Bible (Super VII) from which the following reassertion of the aim of Literature and Dogma comes:

Some of the comments on Literature and Dogma did, I own, surprise me in spite of a tolerably long experience of men's propensity to mistake things. Again and again I was reproached with having done, in that book, just what I had formerly blamed the Bishop of Natal for doing. But Literature and Dogma had altogether for its object, and so too has the present work, to show the truth and necessity of Christianity, and its power and charm for the heart, mind, and imagination of man, even though the preternatural, which is now its popular sanction, should have to be given up. (Super VII, p.377)

Arnold remained unrepentant in his attack on rigid orthodoxy, 'confident in its traditions and imaginations' with its unfounded charges of 'atheism' levelled at liberal, open-minded interpretations of the Bible:

So deeply unsound is the mass of traditions and imagination of which popular religion consists, so gross a distortion and caricature of the true religion does it present, that future times will hardly comprehend its audacity in calling those who abjure it atheists; while its being stigmatised itself with this hard name will astonish no one. (Super VII, p.142)

The process of secularization that Arnold feared has gone even further than he (or almost any Victorian) could have anticipated, so that the term 'atheist', if not quite meaningless, has today lost most of its sting. In a pluralistic society it would be hard to argue 'the necessity of Christianity'; but its power and value, rather along the open-ended lines that Arnold presents it, can be argued, particularly in view of the moral uncertainty of our time, and the numerous rival dogmas that challenge men's allegiance and offer to fill the vacuum.

CHAPTER SIX

'LITERATURE AND DOGMA': IRONIC TENSIONS AND IRONIC AIMS

Progress is nothing but the victory of laughter over dogma.

Benjamin Decasseres, Fantasia Impromptu, 1933

Humour is the only test of gravity; and gravity of humour. For a subject which will not bear raillery is suspicious; and a jest which will not bear a serious examination is certainly false wit.

quoted by the Third Earl of Shaftesbury,

Characteristics, 1711

The morality of irony, like the morality of science, philosophy, and art, is a morality of intelligence. The ironist's virtue is mental alertness and agility. His business is to make life unbearable for troglodytes, to keep open house for ideas, and to go on asking questions.

D C Muecke, The Compass of Irony, 1969

The examination of a writer's literary technique would appear to have little relevance to the school curriculum - even if the writer concerned is one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education. And indeed at the surface level of distinct disciplines neither Literature and Dogma nor its style make any overt contribution to curriculum construction. At a deeper level, however, as I hope to show, both the work and its method are fit objects of attention for those who are concerned to understand inter-disciplinary tensions and relationships. In examining Arnold's ironic approach, moreover, this chapter seeks to explore something of the psycho-social ethos within which our school curricula have to function - a changing ethos, the significance of which Arnold (a 'modern' before his time) was among the first to appreciate. A fuller discussion of the Zeitgeist, the term by which Arnold characterizes 'the main movement of mind' of a given time, is reserved for chapter 9. Meanwhile the present chapter aims to show that Arnold's irony was no mere superficial addition or decorative technique, but part and parcel of the message he was delivering - a message acutely prefiguring subsequent developments in literature and world view.

Arnold's commitment to detachment

'Whatever humiliations may be in store for religion in the future',

Arnold observes in the Introduction to Literature and Dogma, 'the friends of

physical science will not object to our saying, that, after them and the aristocracy, the leaders of the religious world fill a prominent place in the public eye even now, and one cannot help noticing what their opinions and likings are' (Super VI, p.165). It was the opinions and likings of 'the distinguished Chancellor of the University of Oxford', Lord Salisbury - both a member of the aristocracy and something of a lay leader in the religious world - it will be remembered, that had particularly aggravated Arnold into writing Literature and Dogma by telling the public that 'religion is no more to be severed from dogma than light from the sun' (ibid., p.166). 'He is a dangerous man,' Arnold wrote to his mother on June 25, 1870,

chiefly from his want of any true sense and experience of literature and its beneficent function. Religion he knows, and physical science he knows, but the immense work between the two, which is for literature to accomplish, he knows nothing of, and all his speeches at Oxford pointed this way. (Russell, 1895, vol. ii, p.35)

Lord Salisbury upheld the dogma of religion, others had created a dogma out of 'science'; Arnold's Literature and Dogma was an example of literature attempting to 'work between the two' (directly in this case, and not indirectly as is its usual manner of working).

In occupying and upholding a position between the two opposing points of view, maintaining elements for and against both 'sides', and seeking to justify the validity of this state of ambivalence - in working within the tensions thus created, irony was a necessary product of Arnold's situation. D C Muecke (1970), discussing what he terms 'general irony', puts the position thus:

For him who sees no possibility of reconciling (unavoidable) opposites the only alternative is irony: a sense of irony will not make him any less a victim of these predicaments but will enable him in some degree to transcend them. (p.77)

In this respect, Arnold was adopting a stance of detachment, pursuing (as he advocates in The Function of Criticism at the Present Time (Super III) 'a disinterested endeavour to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world' (p.283) even when this involves coping simultaneously with contrarities such as the necessary objectivity of

science and the necessary subjectivity of religion. Instead of opting for one camp or the other, in the manner of an increasing number of his contemporaries, Arnold embraced elements of each, facing up to the ironic tension between them as an inevitable factor of the human condition and transcending the potentially debilitating effects of the paradox by this very act of recognition.

The contemporary controversy between supporters of secular and religious education provides an example of Arnold's Janus-like operation. Writing of the tension between these two forces, Gordon and Lawton (1978) observe that

In particular, many in the Owenite tradition saw the secularization of the curriculum as an opportunity to sweep away the superstition inherent in the religious aspects of the curriculum, and to replace it by a scientific understanding of the universe and an increased awareness of the political and economic aspects of society. (p.62)

Arnold, for his part, sought to 'sweep away the superstition' and the dogma while preserving the moral and the more spiritual aspects of religion; and to reduce the mechanistic aspects of scientific thinking habits while promoting and preserving 'a scientific understanding of the universe', and the scientific principles of verification and openness.

While maintaining a high degree of detachment to the fields of his concern, however, Arnold was deeply committed to his enterprise of showing the importance of this detachment. He had seen too much dogmatism and sectarian strife to remain unconcerned about their disruptive effects on society; and in combating what he felt to be a pernicious social evil, Arnold adopted his satirical stance of ironic ridicule and mockery. The victims of Arnold's satire - the Dean of Norwich, the Bishops of Winchester and Gloucester, the Archbishop of York and Lord Salisbury, among others - are the scapegoats chosen to bear the main burden of guilt for dogmatic intolerance, largely because their recent acts or utterances in this vein laid them wide open to attack on this ground (Blackburn, 1945). How Arnold's employment of humour and ridicule in connection with serious matters outraged many (though not all) of his contemporaries has been seen

in chapter 5. However, as Batho and Dobree (1950) comment: '"levity" is an attitude of mind allowable to a man who wishes to attack something he feels to be dangerous; it is a more effective weapon than solemnity.'

Some characteristics of Arnold's method

Even among the severer critics of Arnold's Literature and Dogma were some who felt compelled to praise his style. The critical reviewer of The Saturday Review, for example, admitted that:

He writes the best of all prose, the prose of a poet. His sentences follow with the utmost freedom the mould of his thought; he repeats himself continually, but with variations like those of a skilful musician on a familiar air, and he avoids dullness with instinctive felicity. (The Saturday Review, 1 March, 1973)

This is generous praise indeed considering the assault Arnold makes on the orthodox position held by The Saturday Review. This assault is mounted by means of a whole battery of devices; logical argument; the accumulation of examples from literature and from contemporary events; the suggestive power of repetition with variations; the substitution of foreign terms (German 'Zeitgeist' and 'Aberglaube', Greek 'epieikia', 'metanoia' and 'necrosis', etc.) for their English counterparts, in order to draw attention to overlooked significances; and innumerable ironic devices such as understatement, overstatement and Socratic ignorance. It is this pervasive use of irony which must now be considered.

A helpful categorization of the 'basic features of all irony' occurs in Muecke (1970) where the author lists: (i) (an ironic) 'contrast of appearance and reality, (ii) a confident unawareness (pretended in the ironist, real in the victim of irony) that the appearance is only an appearance, and (iii) the comic effect of this unawareness of a contrasting appearance and reality' (p.35). And to these Muecke later adds two further features: (iv) 'an element of detachment, and (v) an aesthetic element' (p.48).

In relation to (i) the 'contrast' might consist, for example, of (a) the difference between the ironist's overt statement and its real underlying meaning, or it might relate to (b) an exposure of the difference between the apparent significance of an utterance or notion of the

ironist's victim and its actual meaning when given concrete embodiment or carried to its logical conclusions. The first of these kinds of contrast (a) is exemplified when Arnold writes of the authors of the Old Testament: 'Alas, these poor people were not Archbishops of York' or 'When (Israel) begins to speculate, in the schools of Rabbinism, he quickly shows how much less native talent than the Bishops of Winchester and Gloucester ne has for this perilous business' (Super VI, pp.183-184). Their 'poverty' and 'lack of native talent' in speculative matters are meant by Arnold, of course, to be their distinct advantage in apprehending religious matters over the theological dogmatists whose concepts are clouded by 'too much talent for abstract reasoning.' The second kind of contrast (b) is employed by Arnold in dealing with 'the proneness of the human mind to take miracles as evidence' of divine intervention.

Suppose (he writes) I could change the pen with which I write this into a penwiper, I should not thus make what I write any the truer or more convincing. That may be so in reality, but the mass of mankind feel differently. In the judgment of the mass of mankind, could I visibly and undeniably change the pen with which I write this into a penwiper, not only would this which I write acquire a claim to be held perfectly true and convincing, but I should even be entitled to affirm, and to be believed in affirming, propositions the most palpably at war with common fact and experience. (Super VI, p.245)

This reductio ad absurdum of a notion more readily entertained in the abstract, or in the relatively abstract context of ancient history, facilitates Arnold's later conclusion that 'there is, after all, no necessary connexion between walking on the sea and proceeding from the Eternal that loveth righteousness' (Super VI, p.264).

Muecke's categories are not of course intended to be mutually exclusive - they are the 'basic features of irony' which may exist in isolation or in any combination. Consider, for example, Arnold's way of attacking what he calls the theologians' 'insane licence of affirmation'. Already in St Paul and Protestantism he was treating the Calvinistic doctrine of Justification - 'the covenant of redemption, made and agreed upon...says Calvinism, between God the Father and God the Son in the Council of the Trinity before the world began...' (Super VI, p.11).

After a fairly lengthy exposition of this doctrine Arnold sums up the position as follows: 'The important points of Calvinism (are) original sin, free election, effectual calling (and) justification through imputed righteousness....' He concludes that:

The passiveness of man, the activity of God, are the great features of this scheme; there is very little of what man thinks and does; and what God thinks and does is described with such particularity that the figure I have used of the man in the next street cannot but recur strongly to the mind. (Super VI, p.13)

By the time he is writing Literature and Dogma (Super VI, pp.360 and 375-376) the mild touch of irony I have underlined above has been superseded by the more trenchant irony of the Three Lord Shaftesburys (see below, p.169) after which Arnold comments on the speculative theologians: To think they know what passed in the Council of the Trinity is not hard to them; they could easily think they even knew what were the hangings of the Trinity's council chamber. (p. 361)

The comic effect achieved by the concrete imagery draws attention to the ludicrousness of asserting any positive knowledge of anything - concrete or abstract - taking place in the (already abstract and hypothetical) Council of the Trinity; and consequently to the 'confident unawareness' of scholars and theologians prepared baldly to make such assertions. The sequence, developed with ironic detachment and aesthetic artistry, well illustrates the remaining qualities regarded by Muecke as the characteristic features of irony.

Arnold's irreverent and ironic treatment of the three creeds has already been referred to above (see chapter 4, pp.118-9). Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, the Bishop of Gloucester, is indirectly the prime butt of Arnold's irony here. Of another victim, a certain Mr Maurice who 'declared that by reading between the lines he saw in the Thirty-nine Articles and the Athanasian Creed the altogether, perfect expression of the Christian faith', Arnold writes:

...that pure and devout spirit, - of whom, however the truth must at last be told, that in theology he passed his life beating about the bush with deep emotion and never starting the hare...(Super VI, p.383)

And to Mr Erskine of Linlathen's earnest assertion that 'It seems difficult

to conceive that any man should read through the New Testament candidly and attentively, without being convinced that the doctrine of the Trinity is essential to and implied in every part of the system', Arnold comments:

Even already many readers of Mr Erskine feel, when they come across such a sentence as that, as if they had suddenly taken gravel or sand into their mouth.' (ibid.).

In such ways dignity, whenever closely associated with dogma is continually knocked off its perch by Arnold's ironic juxtapositions.

Sometimes he achieves his effect by apparent praise:

It is clear that dogmatists love religion; - for else why do they occupy themselves with it so much, and make it, most of them, the business, even the professional business of their lives? (Super VI, p.167)

The sting here is in the tail of the sentence: 'professional business' smacks sufficiently of profit to cast a shadow over the 'love' of religion with which the sentence began. The uncharitable way in which too many dogmatists 'occupy themselves' with religion is later satirized by Arnold when he illustrates verbatim some of the abusive terms by which rival sects harangue and castigate each other in the columns of The Rock and The Church Times (Super VI, p.278).

Self-disparagement and polite pillorying

Much of Arnold's irony is achieved by means of apparent self-disparagement. He speaks, for example, of his own 'known inaptitude for abstruse reasoning' (Super VI, p.167) and 'our natural inferiority to these ingenious men' (Super VI, p.410). But any misunderstanding of his intentions is usually clearly avoided by the way the context develops:

Cripples...have been known, now and then, to be cast by their very infirmity upon some mental pursuit which has turned out happily for them; and a good fortune of this kind has been ours. (Super VI, p.411)

The fortunate mental pursuit for Arnold was a wide acquaintance with literature, 'letters', for

Minds with small aptitude for abstruse reasoning may yet, through letters, gain some hold on sound judgment and useful knowledge, and may even clear up blunders committed, out of their very excess of talent, by the athletes of logic. (Super VI, p.169)

Sengupta (1961) in an unpublished PhD thesis writes of Arnold that His humility and politeness, mostly affected, were more insulting than

even direct insult. Sometimes an indiscriminate use of irony marred the effect. His denigration of personalities was at times not in good taste. Sometimes it might be doubted if his devastating attacks upon the Nonconformists were in keeping with his doctrine of sweetness and light. (p.596)

Similarly, his attacks on establishment churchmen have been criticized by some writers. His relentless pursuit of the Bishops of Winchester and Gloucester throughout the pages of Literature and Dogma is a case in point. Perhaps Arnold's satire was a little hard on them; but it must be remembered that at the time Arnold was writing the orthodox High Churchmen, of which these two prelates were convenient symbols, held the whip hand in church and even academic matters, controlling many academic appointments at the universities, certainly until the abolition of the University Test Act in 1871. Both Bishops had engaged relentlessly in a controversy denouncing Dean Stanley for allowing 'a Unitarian named Vance Smith, to receive Holy Communion at Westminster Abbey on June 22, 1870' (Livingston, 1970) and again both took a major part in promoting the retention of the compulsory Prayer Book reading in churches of the Athanasian Creed with its 'damnable clauses', abhorred by Arnold for its un-Christlike spirit. The Dean of Norwich, the Archbishop of York and Lord Salisbury get off relatively lightly at Arnold's hands, but his irony dwells on the Bishops of Winchester and Gloucester throughout Literature and Dogma.

Everyone...remembers the Bishops of Winchester and Gloucester making in Convocation their remarkable effort 'to do something,' as they said, 'for the honour of Our Lord's Godhead,' and to mark their sense of 'that infinite separation for time and for eternity which is involved in rejecting the Godhead of the Eternal Son.'

Arnold, despite his lack of Trinitarian orthodoxy, evidently didn't feel this 'infinite separation', and eternity apparently held no horrors for him. He knew that his attempts at 'a literary treatment of religious history and ideas' were anathema to the two bishops:

Those who make them they speak of as 'those who have made shipwreck of the faith;' and they talk of 'the poison openly disseminated by infidels,' and describe the 'progress of infidelity,' which more and more, according to their account, denies God, rejects Christ, and lets loose every human passion.' (ibid.).

By quoting their own narrowly intolerant and uncharitable words Arnold

allows the Bishops of Winchester and Gloucester to condemn themselves, and his subsequent reiterations of their notion of 'doing something for the honour of Our Lord's Godhead' (a metaphysical abstraction) increase the sense of fatuity attaching to it.

Henri Bergson in Le Rire (1900) suggests that 'the attitudes, gestures and movements of the human body are laughable in exact proportion as that body reminds us of a mere machine.' (p.79). The same could be said, perhaps of the human mind. That is why dogmatists are relatively easy game for the satirist. Fixed, 'inert' ideas, inflexible judgments remind us of machines; they cannot react to the paradoxes and vagaries of the dynamic human condition. The 'single vision', says Muecke (1970) is 'non-ironical':

Ironical art and literature should...have both surface and depth, both opacity and transparency, should hold our attention at the formal level while directing it to the level of content'. (p.5)

It is the play between the surface and the deeper meanings of an utterance or situation, or between alternative valid points of view, that generates the 'psychic tension' characteristic of irony. Dogmatists, Arnold would have argued, choose to adopt fixed and rigid patterns of thought in order to avoid such 'psychic tension', preferring the security of group consensus to the perils of individual eclecticism.

The Three Lord Shaftesburys

Muecke develops further the concept of 'psychic tension' by quoting from A R Thompson's Dry Mock (1945) to the effect that 'the ironic contrast must, to be ironic, affect us ^{as} both painful and comic':

In irony, emotions clash...it is both emotional and intellectual - in its literary manifestations, at any rate. To perceive it one must be detached and cool; to feel it one must be pained for a person or idea gone amiss. Laughter rises but is withered on the lips. Someone or something we cherish is cruelly made game of; we see the joke but are hurt by it. (p.15) (quoted in Muecke, 1970, p.33)

One of the most effective passages in the original versions of Literature and Dogma was one which many critics considered took the ironic cruelty too far. Many people failing to understand the item in its context thought it 'an abominable illustration attacking Christianity' (Super VI, p.142)

and the 'victim' himself, Lord Shaftesbury, was apparently pained by it so that Arnold eventually withdrew it - in the Popular Edition of 1884. In doing so Arnold avowed that he was making no concessions to the violent protests of dogmatists,

But the illustration has given pain, I am told, (he explains), in a quarter where my deference, and the deference of all who can appreciate one of the purest careers and noblest characters of our time, is indeed due; and finding that in that quarter pain has been given by the illustration, I do not hesitate to expunge it. (ibid.)

As a result of this it is not easy to consult the original passage in its entirety, but in order to illustrate why it caused the furor that followed it, and to consider its implications in detail, I shall quote it in full from my first edition copy of 1873. Its aim - as will be seen - is to illustrate the literal interpretation commonly adopted, albeit unconsciously of the Protestant tenet of Justification (the dogmatic interpretation of the biblical words: 'The Son of Man came to give his life as a ransom for many.')

In imagining a sort of infinitely magnified and improved Lord Shaftesbury, with a race of vile offenders to deal with, whom his natural goodness would incline him to let off, only his sense of justice will not allow it; then a younger Lord Shaftesbury, on the scale of his father and very dear to him, who might live in grandeur and splendour if he liked, but who prefers to leave his home, to go and live among the race of offenders, and to be put to an ignominious death, on condition that his merits shall be counted against their demerits, and that his father's goodness shall be restrained no longer from taking effect, but any offender shall be admitted to the benefit of it on simply pleading the satisfaction made by the son; and then, finally, a third Lord Shaftesbury, still on the same high scale, who keeps very much in the background, and works in a very occult manner, but very efficaciously nevertheless, and who is busy in applying everywhere the benefits of the son's satisfaction and the father's goodness; - in an imagination, I say, such as this, there is nothing degrading, and this is precisely the Protestant story of Justification. (Arnold, 1873, pp.305-306)

This was probably the longest single sentence in Literature and Dogma; it was certainly the hardest-hitting. But interestingly enough it does not hit out at Lord Shaftesbury himself, but at the anthropomorphising dogmatic theology it illustrates. Lord Shaftesbury, respected by Arnold as by most of his compatriots, is the vehicle only of the illustration, not its butt.

It is doubtful whether Arnold could have found anywhere a more suitable vehicle for making his point. The veneration in which the philanthropic Lord Shaftesbury was held can best be gleaned, perhaps, from Edwin Hodder's

(1887) biography, and its final pages (pp.775-776), quoting tributes to the Earl by the Duke of Argyle and Lord Salisbury, come as near to deification as mortal man can hope to attain (without benefit of legislation in the Roman manner).

In a letter to his publisher, Smith (Super VI, p.452), Arnold justifies his use of the illustration, saying that 'though it makes people cry out, yet it has the advantage of fixing sharply in their minds what I mean'. Later he had to justify himself to his sister, Fan. In a letter dated November, 1874 he maintains that 'ponderous works produce no effect; the religious world which complains of me would not read me if I treated my subject as they say it ought to be treated' (ibid.). And he continues, fortified by his sense of the positive value of his work:

There is a levity which is altogether evil; but to treat miracle and the common anthropomorphic ideas of God as what one may lose and yet keep one's hope, courage and joy, as what are not really matter of life and death in the keeping and losing of them this is desirable and necessary, if one holds, as I do, that the common anthropomorphic ideas of God and the reliance on miracles must and will inevitably pass away. (Russell, 1895, vol (ii), p.120)

Another Lord Shaftesbury

A curious and ironic feature of this whole episode is that in Arnold's lighthearted play with the name of the Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, for the advancement of religion, he was (unconsciously, I believe) following the advice of the Third Earl of Shaftesbury. (The 'sins of the fathers', it seems, shall indeed 'be visited on the sons unto the third and fourth generation'!!)

I am indebted to a work of R L Brett (1951) for details of the Third Earl of Shaftesbury's 'Doctrine of Ridicule' largely developed in the latter's work Characteristics (1714)

I have often wondered (the Third Earl writes) to see men of sense so mightily alarmed at the approach of anything like ridicule on certain subjects; as if they mistrusted their own judgment. (Brett, 1951)

Brett summarizes part of Shaftesbury's view as follows:

Laughter is...a faculty provided by God to correct the extravagancies of our fancy. The reason is often obstructed and overthrown by conceits and follies which are the product of an excited fancy. The use of laughter

is to act as a corrective to these flights of fancy and to bring back the mind to the ways of sober reason. In other words, ridicule is a practical test of the truth. The affectations and enthusiasms which are deviations from reason will wither at the blast of ridicule and truth will stand forth free and unobscured. (ibid.)

Arnold could scarcely have found a better justification for his use of the 'Three Lord Shaftesburys' illustration than in the arguments of the Seventh Earl's great-great-grandfather.

There was a considerable gap, however, between the views of the Third and the Seventh Earls of Shaftesbury. While by no means humourless (see eg. Hodder, 1887, p.648), the Seventh Earl had very strict views about the sober treatment 'with reverence and godly fear' of 'the awful verities of religion' (ibid., p.726). The Third Earl, on the other hand, saw humour and religion in close alliance, as instanced by the three principles of his second Miscellany:

- 1st. That wit and humour are corroborative of religion, and promotive of true faith.
- 2nd. That they are used as proper means of this kind by the holy founders of religion.
- 3rd. That notwithstanding the dark complexion and sour humour of some religious teachers, we may be justly said to have in the main a witty and good-humoured religion.

As a help in assessing Arnold's viewpoint in relation to irony, by comparison with that of the Third Earl of Shaftesbury, it is useful here to consider why the latter held the cheerful view of religion attested by these three principles.

For this purpose it is convenient to refer to Brett's succinct abridgment of Shaftesbury's argument:

Ridicule is a test of truth only because he already holds a certain theory of truth. He believes that reality is an organic, harmonious and perfectly congruous whole. Any statement that is true - in other words, any statement that is descriptive of this reality - cannot but refer to these features, and while these characteristics may not give us a definition, they do provide us with a criterion of truth. Anything that lacks the characteristics of organic harmony and congruity will be unreal; any statement that is incongruous, any statement that reveals an internal disharmony, is untrue. Falsehood is characterized by a quality that can only be described as ridiculous. (Brett, 1951, p.172)

In other words Shaftesbury holds an essentially optimistic view of nature. It is not surprising to learn that, in connection with one of Shaftesbury's works (Brett, 1951, p.63 et seq.), Leibnitz 'declared that

it anticipated most of his own theories' in relation to Theological Optimism.

Many of Arnold's ideas, too, can be seen prefigured in the writings of the Third Earl of Shaftesbury: he has a high respect for reason (Brett, 1951, p.216), but rejects 'systems' (p.59); good is relative ('We cannot say of anything that it is good or bad in itself, without knowing whether it is part of a larger whole which may transcend its goodness or badness' (p.75)), but 'Happiness will result from...our being virtuous' (p.77); he bases his argument for the existence of God on the order and regularity of the laws of nature' (p.64) rather than upon 'miracles, ghosts, (and) apparitions'; he dislikes 'entangling, abstruse philosophy' (p.66) and looks for harmony in 'the mutual dependence of things' (p.71); enthusiasm is in itself a very natural honest passion' (p.167), but 'all affections have their excesses' (ibid.) and religious conviction out of control can 'too easily mount into high fanaticism or degenerate into abject superstition' (ibid.); he deplored Puritan dogma which 'so debased the world that it failed to declare the glory of God' (p.187), and finally 'his moral philosophy gave an order and coherence to moral experience, while allowing moral judgments to remain free of theological authority' (ibid.).

This is not the place for a critique of Shaftesbury's thought (for which the reader is referred to R L Brett's work); but some account of his leading ideas has been given in order to show certain similarities with Arnold's viewpoint and to pose the question whether Arnold's ironic treatment in Literature and Dogma stems from a similar optimistic outlook.

Satire and Irony distinguished

It may be helpful here to consider a distinction often made between satire and irony. Morton Gurewitsch (quoted in Muecke, 1969) suggests that Perhaps the fundamental distinction between irony and satire, in the largest sense of each, is simply that irony deals with the absurd, whereas satire treats the ridiculous. The absurd may be taken to symbolize the incurable and chimerical hoax of things, while the ridiculous may be accepted as standing for life's corrigible deformities. This means

that while the manners of men are the domain of the satirist, the morals of the universe are the preserve of the ironist.

Although this rather brief quotation oversimplifies the relationship between two overlapping concepts, it does draw attention to two quite distinct modes of thought: the mode of thought which ridicules aberrations from behavior appropriate to a world exhibiting fundamental order and harmony; and a viewpoint which questions fundamentally the order, harmony and beneficence of the world itself. Satire, seen in this context, is the corrective weapon of the optimist keeping things in order; irony the stoical affirmation of the pessimist defying chaos. The Third Earl of Shaftesbury fits comfortably into the first category: where does Arnold fit?

The examples of Matthew Arnold's irony quoted earlier in this Chapter (see pp. 164-70) are essentially satirical shafts directed against individuals and groups, and against specific dogmas upheld by such individuals and groups. But they are not (like the early Shaftesbury's satire) directed primarily to uphold prevailing orthodoxy; they are directed against the prevailing orthodox Christian position. Neither are they directed to uphold the new budding orthodoxy of science, as are the writings, in their different ways, of Thomas Huxley, Herbert Spenser and Charles Bradlaugh. Arnold is therefore himself in an ironic position straddled between two disparate orthodoxies. It is a position comparable in certain respects to that of Spinoza, Goethe, Byron or Heinrich Heine - all authors admired by Arnold, authors with whom he felt a certain rapport.

Arnold is therefore in the position characterized by Muecke as that of the General Ironist:

The General Ironist is, on the whole, the sort of person who, while accepting or seeing no way of rejecting the positivist view, likewise sees no way of rejecting the opposite view and consequently is very much aware of the pathos of heaven's falling; he 'cannot but remember such things were that were most precious' to him. He dwells, historically, in the densely populated no-man's land between the old and the new differing from his fellow countrymen in that he knows where he is, knows, that is to say, that there are two sides and that he cannot take either side, or bring them into accord. What he can do is recognize them and, by

presenting them ironically, transcend them - though not absolutely.
(Muecke, 1969, p.130)

To find a mood in Arnold corresponding to the ironist's dwelling in the 'no-man's land between the old and the new' we have only to remember the lines from his 'Stanza from the Grande Chartreuse' where the poet speaks of awaiting and searching forlornly.-

Wandering between two worlds, one dead,
The other powerless to be born...
(Allott, 1965, p.288)

And if we turn to the poem 'Dover Beach' we find further confirmation that Muecke's description of the General Ironist is relevant to Arnold. Despite the calm sea and the fair moon of the poem's opening, the ebb and flow of the waves bring 'The eternal note of sadness in', and we are presented with 'the pathos of the heaven's falling' (to use Muecke's phrase) in the lines:

The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar...
(Allott, 1965, p.239-243)

Finally the poem presents a grim, ironic contrast of optimistic hope dashed by cruel realisation:

...for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and fight
Where ignorant armies clash by night. (ibid.)

Although this poem was probably written about twenty years before Literature and Dogma (1851 is Kenneth Allott's suggested date) it was not published until 1867, indicating that Arnold was still prepared at this late date to acknowledge its tenor as having validity. The overwhelming cosmic irony here is reminiscent of Thomas Hardy's most pessimistic strain. But there remains one note of hope which I have omitted from the beginning of the final stanza quoted above:

Ah, love, let us be true,
to one another!...

Here, in subjective terms, at the level of personal commitment, is the element that breaks through the pessimism of the grimly-drawn environment, and holds the poem (albeit slenderly) in equipoise.

This positive element embryonically present in Dover Beach is more fully developed in the prose of Literature and Dogma in the stress on the joy and happiness derivable from right 'conduct' - essentially a matter of right human relationships. Although there is a positive, optimistic strain throughout Literature and Dogma it is clearly not the same kind of optimism that we find in the theology of Leibnitz or of the Third Earl of Shaftesbury, nor is it the more deeply entrenched (because more heavily assailed) optimism of Cardinal Newman or the Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury.

General irony and the Zeitgeist

The clue to Arnold's orientation, and thus to the mode of his irony, seems to lie in the shift of perspective which he develops in his presentation of the Zeitgeist. A fuller discussion of this must await chapter 9; but Muecke's observations on the development of General Irony are highly relevant at this point. As a result of the pressure of scientific development and technical progress, he writes:

The world also came to be regarded as basically dynamic...Mutability, is now cast as the heroine, Progress, and the new villains are the obstacles to free growth and development; customs, laws, institutions, and to some extent even civilization, systematic thinking, and art. As soon as one begins to think of life as dynamic, anything that stabilizes life will be deplored. Any kind of system, for example, will appear as a solidification of something essentially fluid and hence as a falsification and an obstruction. (Muecke, 1969, p.126)

Excepting for the suggestion that anything 'that stabilizes life will be deplored', this virtually epitomizes Arnold's position - his satire is adopted in the service of the Zeitgeist; the orthodoxy in defence of which he unleashes his shafts of ridicule is a semi-autonomous, dynamic conception:

For (he writes) it is what we call the Time-Spirit which is sapping the

proof from miracles - it is the 'Zeit-Geist' itself. Whether we attack them, or whether we defend them, does not much matter. The human mind as its experience widens, is turning away from them. And for this reason: it sees, as its experience widens, how they arise. (Super VI, p.246)

His new satire defends fluidity, not fixity: rightly sought, he suggests, 'judgment comes almost of itself...We are not beaten from our old opinion by logic, we are not driven off our ground; - our ground changes with us' (my italics) (Super VI, p.168). The very object of Arnold's special concern in Literature and Dogma - the Bible - is 'not rigid, fixed' but 'fluid, passing, and literary' (Super VI, p.152). And here, perhaps, is our final clue to our understanding of Arnold's irony: the Bible is 'literary' to Arnold while it remains a talisman to many of his contemporaries because his apprehension is literary. It is this mode of literary apprehension - part of what Arnold means by the term 'culture' - that he seeks to promote more widely.

The title 'Literature and Dogma' could easily be 'Literature versus Dogma' because in a real sense (to be discussed more fully in Chapters 7 and 8) literature and dogma are incompatible. It is primarily the ironic element in literature which makes this so - particularly in modern literature. To revert to Muecke:

For most serious writers, whether poets, novelists, or dramatists, irony is now much less often a rhetorical or dramatic strategy which they may or may not decide to employ, and much more often a mode of thought silently imposed upon them by the general tendency of the times.' (Muecke, 1969, p.10)

For Arnold, this mode of thought, I hope to show, was both inevitable (see chapter 9) and congenial. He enjoyed juggling with different and opposite points of view, juxtaposing them, evaluating them and either reconciling or (where this was impossible) simply recognizing them. In this sense he is essentially a modern thinker. Muecke comments on the prevalence of irony of this kind in the first half of this century:

The object of this ironic procedure might be to achieve a balanced all-round view, to express one's awareness of the complexity of life or the relativity of values, to express a larger and richer meaning than would be possible with direct statement, to avoid being over-simple or over-dogmatic, to show that one has earned the right to an opinion by showing that one is aware of its potentially destructive opposite. (Muecke, 1970, p.24)

For Arnold, irony was partly a 'sophisticated weapon at the disposal of satire' (in the old sense, but for a new purpose), but he also belongs with the more modern General Ironists who recognize 'that the world was not made with them particularly in mind.' He may not have been prepared to accept 'the death of God', but he was happy to transmute the orthodox, personal anthropomorphic God of his contemporaries into 'the stream of tendency by which all things seek to fulfil the law of their being' or 'the enduring power, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness.'

His own means of 'defeating cosmic hope and despair', in addition to transcending it through irony, was to stress the availability of love, help, spiritual and emotional nourishment to those prepared to pursue self-knowledge and right action, and unafraid to make the attempt to 'see life clearly and to see it whole' - incongruities and all. Ultimately, Arnold's aims in Literature and Dogma were irenic, seeking reconciliation between clashing cultural values; while his means were ironic, attacking with satirical shafts the citadels of authoritarian dogma. As Basil Willey (1975) justly observes: 'like a good surgeon, he destroyed only for preservation's sake'.

P A R T T H R E E

SOME KEY CONCEPTS CONSIDERED

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE CONCEPT OF 'LITERATURE'

...A criticism of life. The end^{and} aim of all literature, if one considers it attentively, is, in truth, nothing but that.

Matthew Arnold: Joubert, 1864

A society without a literature has that much less chance of embodying within its temper and so within its organization something of the fullness of human experience. We only know certain things by articulating them or bodying them out. This does not mean that we have to 'argue them out'. We may know some things only by approaching them metaphorically, as dramatic 'play'.

Richard Hoggart: Speaking to Each Other, 1973

Matthew Arnold makes high claims for literature as a source of value-acquisition; his view of religious dogma for this purpose is correspondingly low. It is the object of this chapter to examine Arnold's view of the nature and function of literature, enlarging the discussion to include the views of other significant writers on the subject as appropriate. Although, in considering the relation of literature to science and religion certain curricular implications will emerge in this chapter, the more specific discussion of literature and the curriculum is reserved for chapter 11.

Nature and scope of literature

'Literature is a large word', Arnold writes in an essay on Literature and Science (Super X, pp.53-73), 'it may mean everything written with letters or printed in a book. Euclid's Elements and Newton's Principia are thus literature' (p.58). It is certainly more than 'the study of belles lettres...and other ornamental things, of little use for any one whose object is to get at truth and be a practical man' (p.57).

'Literature' for Arnold is the essence of 'culture', the object of which is a pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on all matters which most concern us, the best which has been thought and said in the world - and through this knowledge, turning a stream of fresh and free thought upon our stock notions and habits. (Culture and Anarchy, Super V, p.233)

This process is opposed to rigid, mechanical thinking and dogmatic assumptions, and is, above all, an inward operation employing the imagination

in conjunction with the intellect.

In an essay on Joubert (Super III) Arnold speaks of literature as a 'criticism of life' for 'the end and aim of all literature, if one considers it attentively, is, in truth nothing but that' (p.209). In other words, in its imaginative presentation of an aspect of life, a work of literature embodies implicitly an evaluative element contributed either consciously or unconsciously by the writer, by which the action is, so to speak, judged. By engaging extensively with literature a reader's judgment, in turn, is developed, for:

the valuable thing in letters...is the judgment which forms itself insensibly in a fair mind along with fresh knowledge; and this judgment almost anyone with a fair mind, who will but trouble himself to try and make acquaintance with the best which has been thought and uttered in the world, may, if he is lucky, hope to attain to. For this judgment comes almost of itself; and what it displaces it displaces easily and naturally, and without any turmoil of controversial reasonings. (Super VI, p.168)

This is somewhat akin to T S Eliot's view that our reading, like our food, 'affects us during the process of assimilation and digestion'. The power of criticism develops naturally, says Eliot (1953) because

in the process of being affected by one powerful personality after another, we cease to be dominated by any one, or by any small number. The very different views of life, cohabiting in our minds, affect each other, and our own personality asserts itself and gives each a place in some arrangement peculiar to ourself. (p.37)

Such development depends, of course on relatively wide reading. In Literature and Dogma, Arnold insists that a cultured man will have 'the use of so many books that he can afford not to over-use and mis-use one', whether it is the Bible or any other. We need to gain from a wide acquaintance with literature 'experience of the way in which men have thought and spoken' so that we learn 'to read between the lines' for:

if we read but a very little, we naturally want to press it all; if we read a great deal, we are willing not to press the whole of what we read, and we learn what ought to be pressed and what not. Now this is really the very foundation of any sane criticism. (Super VI, p.153)

At times Arnold suggests that his own acquaintance with literature is a very random, hit-and-miss affair, writing nonchalantly of being 'thrown on letters; thrown upon reading this and that' (p.411); but this is a

stylistic pose adopted for polemical reasons; his recommendations elsewhere for systematic reading are more convincing:

culture is reading; but reading with a purpose to guide it, and with system. He does a good work who does anything to help this; indeed, it is the one essential service now to be rendered to education. (p.162)

Central significance of poetry

So far we have emphasized Arnold's concern for extensive reading; now it is necessary to focus upon what he regarded as central within the whole spectrum of literature - that is, poetry. In an essay on 'The Study of Poetry' (Super IX) Arnold declared his belief that 'we should conceive of poetry worthily, and more highly than it has been the custom to conceive it' (p.161), since it is a medium destined more and more 'to interpret life for us, to console us, to sustain us'. Moreover, 'without poetry, our science will appear incomplete; and most of what now passes with us for religion and philosophy will be replaced by poetry' (pp.161-2). This last claim can scarcely be maintained since both religion and philosophy serve different functions from poetry, although they may in different ways interact with it. Arnold's point about the incompleteness of science, however, is justifiable since by definition science must be incomplete - a tentative, corporate analysis, infinitely pursued. Whereas science is analytic, poetry is synthetic, and its sustaining power, Arnold would argue, lies in its capacity to create 'whole' experiences, or at least satisfying illusions of completeness which help to interpret life to us. Science explores, poetry tells; Arnold's quarrel with dogmatic religion was that it sought to 'tell' in an area which, even more than that open to science, can only be imaginatively 'explored'; and whereas poetry admits that what it tells is only fictional - albeit meaningful fiction - dogmatic theology presented itself as fact. In thus competing with science dogmatic religion was vulnerable in a way which poetry could never be. Therefore, said Arnold:

The future of poetry is immense, because in poetry, where it is worthy of its high destinies, our race, as time goes on, will find an ever surer and surer stay. There is not a creed which is not shaken, not an

accredited dogma which is not shown to be questionable, not a received tradition which does not threaten to dissolve. Our religion has materialised itself in the fact, in the supposed fact; it has attached its emotion to the fact, and now the fact is failing it. But for poetry the idea is everything; the rest is a world of illusion, of divine illusion. Poetry attaches its emotion to the idea; the idea is the fact. The strongest part of our religion to-day is its unconscious poetry (Super IX, p.161)

If we allow for a certain amount of exaggeration, this passage expresses a profound insight with considerable prophetic accuracy in terms of the changing emphasis in theological speculation during recent decades.

To take just one example from The Future of Catholic Christianity (1968), E I Watkin's view has moved a long way from that of his Victorian predecessors when he writes: 'That so much in Scripture has been shown to be myth or legend does not disturb the Platonist who shares his master's valuation of myth as a vehicle for conveying truth beyond the grasp of reason' (p.247); and again: 'Scriptural statements...are human and fallible translations of spiritual insights into conceptual terms or their presentation in and through imagery, poetical and often mythical' (p.234). Such has been the degree of this shift of emphasis that this same Catholic writer is able to quote approvingly of the atheist philosopher, Bertrand Russell, who has arrived on a similar plane of thought from a different direction when he speaks of:

the sense of a mystery half revealed, of a hidden wisdom and glory, of a transfiguring vision in which common things lose their solid importance and become a thin veil behind which the ultimate truth of the world is dimly seen. It is such feelings that are the source of religion and if they were to die, most of what is best would vanish out of life. (quoted on p.227)

Russell is here speaking about art, which he believes 'starts from instinct and rises into the region of the spirit'. 'The life of the spirit, in its turn, centres round impersonal feeling as the life of the mind' (to which he is contrasting it) 'centres around impersonal thought'.

Russell's view of art and its spiritual significance expressed here is not far different from Arnold's view of poetry as given in his essay on 'Maurice de Guérin' (Super III):

The grand power of poetry is its interpretive power; by which I mean,

not a power of drawing out in black and white an explanation of the mystery of the universe, but the power of so dealing with things as to awaken in us a wonderfully full, new and intimate sense of them and of our relations with them. (pp.12-13)

In the same essay Arnold develops his view of the moral influence of poetry, showing with respect to Keats and de Guérin how beauty and truth can be distilled from the suffering and isolation of the poet and excesses of feeling shaped into artefacts with a healing and reconciling power:

I have said that poetry interprets in two ways; it interprets by expressing with magical felicity the physiognomy and movement of the outward world, and it interprets by expressing, with inspired conviction, the ideas and laws of the inward world of man's moral and spiritual nature. In other words, poetry is interpretive both by having a natural magic in it, and by having moral profundity. In both ways it illuminates man; it gives him a satisfying sense of reality...It reconciles him with himself and the universe. (p.33)

Here 'natural magic' seems to express, in a heightened form, what Russell called 'instinct', and 'moral profundity' equates perhaps with the dimly envisioned 'ultimate truth' referred to by Russell. The ethical value of all this, it must be admitted, is in very general terms: we have so far been speaking of 'value' rather than 'values'. We might ask, too, whether in moral matters it is enough for man to be 'reconciled with himself and the universe', whether a sense of 'divine discontent' (to use Charles Kingsley's term) might not be more appropriate as a spur to moral responsibility, and the amelioration of the human condition.

Arnold's own poetry, in many instances, expresses discontent and questioning of the status quo. Indeed he withdrew Empedocles on Etna because it presented 'a continuous state of mental distress...unrelieved by incident, hope, or resistance' (Super I, pp.2-3). This withdrawal was based on Arnold's critical conviction that poetry should be a source of joy - possible even for a tragedy by its ennoblement of the action. As well as presenting poetic truth a poem should be 'a representation from which men can derive enjoyment' (ibid., p.2). As he wrote in a letter to Clough (Lowry, 1932), 'There are two offices of Poetry - one to add to one's store of thoughts and feelings - another to compose and elevate the mind

by a sustained tone, numerous allusions, and a grand style' (p.100).

This elevating function was for Arnold, it appears, its own moral justification.

Poetry at its best an implicit 'criticism of life'

If poetry is to achieve this quality of moral elevation it followed, for Arnold, that 'we must also set our standard for poetry high, since poetry, to be capable of fulfilling such high destinies, must be poetry of a high order of excellence. We must accustom ourselves to a high standard and to a strict judgment' (Super IX, p.162). It was in consequence of this aim that Arnold set up his much-debated 'touchstones' approach to literary criticism. Although it is now commonly recognized that this is not a satisfactory way of evaluating the vast diversity of poetry that exists, it perhaps had the salutary effect of reminding readers that there are degrees of excellence, soundness and truth in poetry and that sound literary judgment is a valuable protection against charlatanism and mediocrity. Perhaps it should be added that although, in this connection, Arnold praised Wordsworth among other poets for cooperating 'with the benign tendencies in human nature and society' and being 'efficacious in making men wiser, better, and happier' (Super IX, p.55), he believed that the beneficial effects in question derived from those poems where the moral element was implicit rather than explicit. Once a poem begins to preach, to elaborate an ethical system, to philosophize, 'however true the doctrine may be, it has...none of the characters of poetic truth which we require from a poet, and in which Wordsworth is really strong' (ibid., p.49).

So pervasive is Arnold's respect for Wordsworth that we find him discussing him in his essay on Byron (Super IX); examining the kind of truth a poet is concerned with:

It is the power with which Wordsworth feels the resources of joy offered to us in nature, offered to us in the primary human affections and duties, and in the power with which, in his moments of inspiration, he renders this joy, and makes us, too, feel it; a force greater than himself seeming to lift him and to prompt his tongue, so that he speaks

in a style far above any style of which he has the constant command, and with a truth far beyond any philosophic truth of which he has the conscious and assured possession. (pp.230-231)

Arnold's essential point here seems to be that Wordsworth can apprehend and express through his poetry more than he can comprehend or convey through reasoned discourse of the potential for happiness in nature and human relationships. Poetic truth works through 'imaginative reason', not through logical or philosophical reason; to be a just 'criticism of life' it must combine 'truth and seriousness of substance and matter' with 'felicity and perfection of diction and manner' (ibid., p.228). The 'high seriousness' (Super IX, p.184) Arnold demands of the poet he sees in terms of 'absolute sincerity' - something which today critics feel uneasy about assessing, but which for Arnold seems to be observation and reflection without cant or hypocrisy. There is something paradoxical, perhaps, in Arnold's Sophoclean concern to 'see life clearly and to see it whole' and his predilection for finding truth and beauty in constant combination. He praises Keats for perceiving 'the necessary relation of beauty with truth, and of both with joy' (Super IX, p.214). Shortly afterwards he speaks of the 'vital connection of beauty with truth' (ibid.), and here I think he is on safer ground, if we take 'vital' to mean life-giving, life-enhancing; but to speak of a necessary connection between beauty and truth is to ignore the unlovely, ugly and sordid aspects of life as reprehensibly as some advocates of 'realism' exaggerate them.

This perhaps gives some justification to W F Connell's (1950) complaint that Arnold did not attempt to explain 'how good poetry can beget a love of truth' (p.184). However, as he continues Connell himself goes astray:

From the fact that it has a peculiarly emotional appeal it might equally be contended that good poetry is sometimes inimical to a rational consideration of the facts with which it deals. The duty of being true to ourselves, and of learning to see things as they really are, which is an important element of Arnold's doctrine of culture, as it was also of Plato's, implies rather a search for truth freed from its emotional trappings. (p.184)

This prosaic observation suggests an inability to distinguish between 'truth' and 'fact'. Poetry is concerned with the truth of experience not the isolation and analysis of the 'facts' which provide its context - even if such a thing were possible. Experience is too complex to yield to any kind of comprehensive factual analysis: even the saturation techniques of Virginia Woolf and James Joyce involve an immense amount of selection from the potential context. The kind of truth with which literature is concerned cannot be 'freed from its emotional trappings'; 'to see things as they really are' is for human beings to see them imbued with emotional significance. Moreover, any would-be 'rational consideration' of the facts of life which fails to take account of this will dangerously oversimplify them.

Freedom and form: the autonomy of poetry

Catherine Runcie (1969) shows a better understanding of Arnold's view of literature in her discussion of myth and poetry:

Arnold sees myth as a shape, as a structure, bearing and retaining original and permanent human significance or value - naturalistic or ethical or intellectual or affective. As a formulation of this value of man in the universe, myth is what the poet goes back to in his search for actions that have meaning for all men. Poetry, then, which Arnold says is the imitation of a noble and significant action, of which the source is most probably myth, is the representation of nothing less than the permanent value of being and being human in an alien world...(p.30)

It is the artistic structure that gives meaning and a satisfying sense of permanence to human actions and purposes in 'an alien world'. In discussion of the theory of symbols, Northrop Frye (1965) makes a somewhat similar point. He distinguishes between 'descriptive or assertive writing' where the emphasis is directed 'outwards' to the world of facts, and 'imaginative', hypothetical or literary writing where 'the standards of outward meaning are secondary'.

In literature, questions of fact or truth are subordinated to the primary literary aim of producing a structure of words for its own sake, and the sign-values of symbols are subordinated to their importance as a structure of interconnected motifs. Wherever we have an autonomous verbal structure of this kind, we have literature. (p.74)

The communication of poetic 'truth' depends upon a shared convention; 'the poet...depends, not on descriptive truth, but on conformity to his

hypothetical postulates' (p.76), and the value of his product is that its 'inward meaning, the self-contained verbal pattern, is the field of the responses connected with pleasure, beauty, and interest' (p.74).

This is perhaps what Arnold intended in his affirmation of a necessary relation between beauty and truth, since for Arnold, too, literature is an inward operation relatively independent of the outward world of facts.

It is important to recognize, however, that literature is only relatively independent of the world of facts; it is not absolutely independent of it, otherwise it would simply be a game. The word 'play' applied to drama suggests the game-element in literature; but no play, poem or novel can escape the incorporation of factors from real life - = however fantastic it may seem in its presentation of them - and in its transmutation of fact into fiction it can scarcely fail to embody an evaluative element. It is this evaluative element which constitutes the 'truth' of poetry. Hence the term 'poetic justice'; although the truths presented through literature are often more subtle and sophisticated than that suggested by the simple formula of success and happiness for the good and the punishment of failure for the bad. The truths and complexities of literature, while retaining their own essence and structure, must reflect the truths and complexities of life. As Samuel Johnson (1756) observed, 'literature is a kind of intellectual light which, like the light of the sun, may sometimes enable us to see what we do not like', Like the sun, it 'makes the world aware of itself', to quote the words of Jean-Paul Sartre (1967) who continues, 'It is by means of the book that the members ...of society (are)...able to get their bearings, to see themselves and see their situation' (p.118). It is an offering freely made 'to the free judgement of all men, the reflective self-awareness of a classless society' (ibid.), and as such is the means of man's 'spiritualiation':

Spiritualization, that is, renewal. And there is nothing else to

spiritualize, nothing else to renew but this multicoloured and concrete world with its weight, its opaqueness, its zones of generalization, and its swarm of anecdotes, and that invincible Evil which gnaws at it without ever being able to destroy it. The writer will renew it as it is, the raw, sweaty, smelly, everyday world, in order to submit it to freedoms on the foundation of a freedom.' (p.118)

The freedom of the writer is in one sense limitless (since anything imaginable can be written down), but in another sense limited by the laws of credibility. If literature promises too much, sooner or later it lets its reader down; if it promises too little it fails to elevate, nourish or sustain. We feel most secure with literature that 'sees life clearly and sees it whole'.

George Steiner (1969) takes I A Richards to task for suggesting (in Practical Criticism) that 'the question of belief or disbelief, in the intellectual sense, never arises when we are reading well. If unfortunately it does arise, either through the poet's fault or our own, we have for the moment ceased to be reading and have become astronomers, or theologians, or moralists, persons engaged in quite a different type of activity'. On the contrary, George Steiner asserts, 'we have become men' for 'to read great literature as if it did not have upon us an urgent design...is to do little more than to make entries in a librarian's catalogue' (p.90), and he goes on to quote approvingly from a letter by Kafka: 'what we must have are those books which come upon us like ill-fortune, and distress us deeply, like the death of one we love better than ourselves, like suicide. A book must be an ice-axe to break the sea frozen inside us'. (ibid.). I think, in fact, that the two views are not irreconcilable. I A Richards seems to have been calling for what Coleridge expressed as a 'willing suspension of disbelief' in order to meet the writer halfway; he was not, I think, asking the reader to abdicate all moral responsibility in his final evaluation of the work read. But it is time to return to Arnold's view of literature, and in particular to the distinctions he drew between literature and science.

Poetry and science

'Poetry', said Arnold (Neiman, 1960), 'gives the idea but it gives it touched with beauty, heightened by emotion...Science...adds thought to thought, accumulates the elements of a synthesis which will never be complete' (p.230). If this synthesis is 'touched with beauty and emotion' it has, in Arnold's view, 'passed out of the sphere of science'. This seems a little unfair to science. There is no doubt that scientific discoveries, or syntheses - however tentative by nature - have inspired their discoverers with a sense of their beauty and aroused a powerful emotional reaction in them. We have only to recall Archimedes cry of 'Eureka!' on witnessing the tell-tale displacement of his bathwater; and Paulo Uccello, the first artist to put the science of perspective on a sound footing, is said to have aroused his long-suffering wife in the middle of the night exclaiming: 'Oh what a wonderful thing is this perspective!' For Arnold, however, it seems that such reactions would have been well-nigh incomprehensible,

For the study of letters (he wrote in School and Universities on the Continent (Super IV) is the study of the operation of human force, of human freedom and activity; the study of nature is the study of the operation of non-human forces, of human limitation and passivity. The contemplation of human force and activity tends naturally to heighten our force and activity; the contemplation of human limits and passivity tends rather to check it. (p.292)

W F Connell (1950) rightly observes that this assumption that 'the study of human activity is on the whole inspiring, whilst the study of natural forces is for the most part depressing' (p.172) is 'a curiously partial one'. Since even Arnold had admitted that his own poem 'Empedocles on Etna' was depressing he should be prepared to accept that both the humanities and the sciences were equally capable of depressing - or for that matter inspiring. From which Connell fairly concludes: 'All that Arnold has really said, therefore, is that inspiring things tend to inspire, and depressing things tend to depress - which is not a particularly important contribution to the philosophy of education'

(p.172). While I agree with Connell's criticism voiced here, it may be possible to salvage a shred of truth from Arnold's contention if we consider not the methods and discoveries of science but the results of a great deal of scientific development in terms of technology, for example in (say) high-rise buildings or nuclear reactors which have often been found to have a dwarfing, alienating effect on human beings where one might have expected them to be inspiring. A further mitigating point on Arnold's behalf is that he recognized, despite his rather ill-judged comparison, the importance of both scientific and humanistic pursuits for attaining the 'full circle of knowledge' desirable in education (Super IV, p, 291).

In Literature and Science (Super X), two decades later, Arnold spelt out the importance of science more fully. He was concerned in this essay to defend literature from those scientifically-minded educationalists who wanted to go beyond the modest claims of Thomas Huxley and oust the humanities in favour of a staple diet of science in schools:

There is...really no quarrel between Professor Huxley and me as to whether knowing the great results of the modern scientific study of nature is not required as a part of our culture, as well as knowing the products of literature and art (p.59),

so long as a balance is maintained, and science is not made the be-all and end-all.

Moreover, it is quite true that the habit of dealing with facts, which is given by the study of nature, is...an excellent discipline. The appeal, in the study of nature, is constantly to observation and experiment; not only is it said that the thing is so, but we can be made to see that it is so...(p.60)

This recognition is in line with Arnold's own practice, as his concern for 'verification' in Literature and Dogma bears witness. Earlier in the same essay on literature and science Arnold affirms that 'there can be no doubt that...all learning is scientific which is systematically laid out and followed up to its original sources, and that a genuine humanism is scientific' (p.57). He could scarcely go further in seeking to reconcile the claims of the two main arcs of the 'circle of knowledge': both become identified with its complete circumference!

This again is reflected in Arnold's practice: his aims in Literature and Dogma, however much he may have fallen short of them, were those of a 'genuine humanism' in his disinterested concern to get back to 'original sources' and examine anomalies systematically.

Nevertheless, Arnold was concerned to distinguish between those studies which tended to issue in conduct (through their concern with goodness, beauty, self-preservation) and those purely 'instrument-knowledges' which could pursue their way as isolated specialisms aloof from the business of living although potentially 'invaluable as instruments to something beyond' themselves (p.63). Formal logic, the study of Greek philology and pure mathematics are cited in this category, and all are felt to be remote from the interest and aptitude of the bulk of mankind.

The natural sciences do not, however, stand on the same footing with these instrument-knowledges. Experience shows us that the generality of man will find more interest in learning that, when a taper burns, the wax is converted into carbonic acid and water, or in learning the explanation of the phenomenon of dew, or in learning how the circulation of the blood is carried on, than they find in learning that the genative plural of pais and pas does not take the circumflex on the termination. And one piece of natural knowledge is added to another, and others are added to that, and at last we come to propositions so interesting as Mr Darwin's famous proposition that 'our ancestor was a hairy quadruped furnished with a tail and pointed ears, probably arboreal in his habits.' Or we come to propositions of such reach and magnitude as those which Professor Huxley delivers, when he says that the notions of our forefathers about the beginning and the end of the world were all wrong, and that nature is the expression of a definite order with which nothing interferes. (p.64)

Despite the playful reference to Greek grammar and our hairy, arboreal ancestor, Arnold is essentially serious here, sharing with Huxley a deep respect for the 'definite order with which nothing interferes' in nature, and willing to assert in Literature and Dogma, as we have seen, the then highly controversial proposition that 'miracles do not happen', on the strength of this.

Arnold welcomed the frank acceptance of the advances of science; the Zeitgeist was moving that way, and there was no point in resisting it. And in any case,

...the more that men's minds are cleared, the more that the results of

science are frankly accepted, the more that poetry and eloquence come to be received and studied as what in truth they really are, - the criticism of life by gifted men, alive with extraordinary power at an unusual number of points; - so much the more will the value of humane letters, and of art also, which is an utterance having a like kind of power with theirs, be felt and acknowledged, and their place in education be secured. (pp.68-69)

Arnold therefore sought to avoid 'invidious comparisons' between the merits of the humanities and those of science, but despite this he felt more concern for the 'student of the natural sciences only' than for a student whose education was restricted to 'humane letters' for the former 'will probably be unsatisfied, or at any rate incomplete' (p.69) as the result of his restriction to factual knowledge alone. Thomas Huxley (1849), on his part, recognized that 'there are other forms of culture beside physical science; and I should be profoundly sorry (he added) to see the fact forgotten, or even to observe a tendency to starve, or cripple, literary, or aesthetic, culture for the sake of science'.

The rift between science and the humanities

In the nineteenth century the language of science and the language of literature were relatively undifferentiated: Darwin and Huxley could express feelings alongside the facts they expounded without any suggestion of incongruity. In the early twentieth century, however, cognitive and affective aspects of discourse began to be much more sharply differentiated, literature largely confining itself to subjective emotion and science to the objective exposition of facts and related theories. Increasing specialization accelerated the process of dichotomization and exacerbated its ill effects making communication between adherents of the arts and of the sciences increasingly impossible so that by 1959 it was possible for C P Snow (1964) to write about 'two cultures' inhabiting two mutually incomprehensible worlds. In a post-atomic age his alarm was justifiable:

It is dangerous to have two cultures which can't or don't communicate. In a time when science is determining much of our destiny, that is whether we live or die, it is dangerous in the most practical terms. Scientists

can give bad advice, and decision-makers can't know whether it is good or bad. On the other hand, scientists in a divided culture provide a knowledge of some potentialities which is theirs alone. All this makes the political process more complex, and in some ways more dangerous, than we should be prepared to tolerate for long, either for the purposes of avoiding disasters, or for fulfilling - what is waiting as a challenge to our conscience and goodwill - a definable social hope. (p.90)

As a novelist and technological administrator, C P Snow was well qualified to express an opinion on this problem. The education system with its overspecialization and exam-biased curriculum was entrenching the position. Library services, at the centre of communication structures, became increasingly sensitive to certain aspects of the problem, and D J Foskett (1964) in Science, Humanism and Libraries made an outright plea for the humanization of scientific writing:

By seeking to make their prose 'objective', scientists deny themselves the support of the human faculty of experiencing emotion, which brings their attempts at communication to a monotonous level of colourless uniformity. They find interest and often inspiration in their work; if they stress this aspect, instead of trying to eliminate it, they will catch the imagination of other men, and by mutual effort we shall break down the barriers of understanding. (p.32)

While fully recognizing the reasons for scientific detachment and care in exposition, Foskett was concerned about the growth of esotericism and the entrenchment of hostility between arts-trained and science-trained writers and readers. He was able to quote, to exemplify his own principles of good communication, the successful mid-century lectures of

Professor R O Kapp on the presentation of technical information:

Kapp's well-known series of lectures aroused great interest, and their popularity showed how widespread was the concern over the communication of ideas. His theory of Functional English marked a new step forward, for although he drew a distinction between Functional and imaginative English, he allowed the writer, even of a scientific paper for scientists, to draw on the resource of his imagination and to use colourful words and metaphors if they were appropriate. (p.4)

I am not qualified to judge how far scientific writers have followed this lead, but it is saddening to note the degree to which writers on literature are tending towards obscurantism and quasi-scientific jargon in what seems to me to be an inappropriate attempt to keep up with the Zeitgeist. If open cross-cultural communication between science and the humanities is to be developed we need a reduction of jargon in both camps and a willingness among both to be vulnerable - to 'risk' being understood

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even if this seems to reduce our stature. This, if we revert to Arnold's terminology, is the function of culture, for (as he writes in Culture and Anarchy, (Super V)) 'the men of culture are the true apostles of equality':

The great men of culture are those who have had a passion for diffusing, for making prevail, for carrying from one end of society to the other, the best knowledge, the best ideas of their time; who have laboured to divest knowledge of all that was harsh, uncouth, difficult, abstract, professional, exclusive; to humanize it, to make it efficient outside the clique of the cultivated and learned, yet still remaining the best knowledge and thought of the time...(p.113)

This leavening function was the value of literature, understood in its widest sense. Arnold could point to his friend Huxley as Foskett could cite Professor Kapp as scientific exponents of this principle; he himself sought to humanize 'theology' in Literature and Dogma - seeking to make available to critical minds what the Zeitgeist had estranged them from. Arnold saw this process as necessary not only between specialisms within society, but between classes: culture, in this sense, is 'the social idea' (Arnold's italics). 'It seeks to do away with classes; to make the best that has been thought and known in the world current everywhere; to make all men live in an atmosphere of sweetness and light, where they may use ideas, as it uses them itself, freely, - nourished, and not bound by them' (p.113). Writers and readers share a responsibility in this process. Readers by keeping their critical faculties and powers of apprehension alert through wide acquaintance with literature. Writers by making 'harsh' knowledge palatable; 'uncouth' (i.e. unfamiliar) knowledge more widely current; 'difficult' knowledge easier to comprehend; 'abstract' ideas accessible through concrete examples; 'professional' knowledge more generally available; and 'exclusive' knowledge accessible universally. 'Plenty of people will try to indoctrinate the masses with the set of ideas and judgments constituting the creed of their own profession or party' (p.112). But culture, unlike 'religious and political organisations' works by making its ideas available freely - so that people are 'nourished, and not bound by them' (p.113).

Literature, science and dogma

We have seen something of Arnold's view of the relation between literature and science, and of the continuing significance of this; it is now necessary to look at the distinction he makes between literature and theological dogma. His main contention is that theologians have sought to make a science out of data which belongs more properly to the province of art. In his Preface to God and the Bible (Super VI) Arnold tells how 'Mr Gladstone complains that objectors to the Athanasian Creed seem to forget, most of them, "that theology is a science, and that it therefore has a technical language which is likely to be grossly misunderstood by those who have never made it a subject of study"' (p.387). Inevitably Arnold objects to the esoteric basis of this complaint. However, his reply goes well beyond this objection:

...the fact is, that their science is a science going gravely and confidently upon the uncorrected data of a time of imperfect observation and boundless credulity, and, therefore, the more formal and technical it gets, the more hollow it is. And the hollowness of the results exhibited by theologians is more apparent than the reason thereof, and a clear-headed man can often perceive that what the theologians say is futile, although he may never have been led to see that the untrustworthiness of their miraculous data is the real cause. (p.387)

Science makes effective progress to the extent that every new discovery harmonizes and verifies the structure of data extant, or, when new findings contradict and challenge current structures, by modifying its data to take account of them. With theology there is no means of either verifying or challenging the data; it simply becomes out of step if thought patterns current in society change with the Zeitgeist.

The only way to renew the insights of religion when this happens is to go back to the original data and examine them afresh; and the principle data of theology are in biblical scripture. However, when we examine this material we find that

The language of the Bible...is literary, not scientific language; language thrown out at an object of consciousness not fully grasped, which inspired emotion. Evidently, if the object be one not fully to be grasped, and one to inspire emotion, the language of figure and feeling will satisfy us better about it, will cover more of what we seek to express, than

the language of literal fact and science. The language of science about it will be below what we feel to be the truth. (Super VI, p.189)

The sub-title of Literature and Dogma (from which this quotation comes) is significantly: 'Towards a better apprehension of the Bible' (my italics). 'Apprehension' is a literary mode of understanding, particularly appropriate to poetry, as distinct from 'comprehension' which is more fittingly applied to the understanding of discursive exposition and rational thought. We apprehend the 'language of figure and feeling', responding to it with imaginative insight. Imagery, symbolism, personification are appropriate means of expressing religious insights: the important thing is to recognize them for the literary devices they are, and not to mistake them for history and science:

Wordsworth calls the earth "the mighty mother of mankind", and the geographers call her "an oblate spheroid"; Wordsworth's expression is more proper and adequate to convey what men feel about the earth; but it is not therefore the more scientifically exact. (Super VI, footnote, pp.189-190)

If the Bible is read in this spirit, the language of miracle, prophecy, figure and feeling is not likely to be made the data of an exact science such as Mr Gladstone (and the Bishops of Winchester and Gloucester) would defend.

Once such a 'science' is ossified into a system its vulnerability to change and to other systems of a similar nature makes it inevitably the subject of special pleading in a demeaning effort to maintain it. Worse still, the system as a whole, with all its imperfections, may be used 'to indoctrinate the masses', to 'bind them' to thought forms which may be inimical to the climate of the age. Hence Arnold's determination to go back to the roots of the scriptures and to 'treat the evidence about the Canon with a mind resolutely free and straightforward, determined to reject nothing because it does not suit us, and to proceed as we should proceed in a literary enquiry where we were wholly disinterested' (Super VII, p.263). On the whole Arnold does this with a high degree of detachment and fairmindedness, although of course he is not entirely

disinterested since he is deeply concerned to salvage the Christian values - the principles of conduct - from the theological edifice he subjects to scrutiny. He believes, however, that these values will be better sustained by the suggestive poetic power of scriptural literature than by the crumbling theological edifice of Christian theological dogma.

Arnold shared with Keats a capacity described by the latter as 'negative capability' (Forman, 1948) - 'that is, when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason' (p.72).. Able to tolerate our human incapacity to 'express the in-expressible' Arnold was offended by dogmas which assertively categorised and classified ineffable mysteries in neat compartments for general consumption. The tentative offerings of literary expression were more congenial to him. In this respect again he would have agreed with Keats: 'We hate poetry' (the latter wrote) 'which has a palpable design on us...Poetry should be great and unobtrusive, a thing which enters into one's soul, and does not startle or amaze it with itself, but with its subject' (Letters, p.96). Dogma - whether it is Christian, Muslim, or Marxist - has a 'palpable design on us': to keep us securely within the fold of the elect, and to dictate the criteria for judging the outsiders. Its laudable intention is to protect and preserve society for the benefit of the individuals composing it; but the more forcefully it pursues this end, the more the wellbeing of individuals is likely to be overlooked in favour of the abstract general 'good'. Literature on the other hand, is concerned to present the predicaments of particular individuals in specific situations - not as fact, but as imaginative possibility.

Arnold would certainly not have agreed with Lenin's view of literature: that 'it must become a cog and a screw of one single great social democratic machine' (Eagleton, 1976) or with Lenin's assertion that literature

must be 'inseparably linked with the working-class movement'. Arnold's concern for democracy and for the 'masses' (the working class) could certainly not have been brought to justify the promotion of literature 'with a palpable design' on its readers - 'intellectual food prepared and adapted to 'talk down to' the masses he would have called this. And to Lenin's observation that 'the freedom of the bourgeois writer is only masked dependence on the moneybag' he would doubtless query the 'freedom' of the writer in a Marxist-Leninist state. Similarly with Marxist criticism, one cannot imagine Arnold agreeing far with Plekhanov (Lukacs, 1962) that 'the first task of a critic is to translate the idea of a given work of art from the language of art into the language of sociology, to find what may be termed the social equivalent of the given literary phenomenon'. There is scarcely room for a 'free spontaneous flow of consciousness' in such a procedure; it is (to quote a favourite phrase of Arnold's) 'mere machinery'. Finally, on this issue, writing of the Soviet Futurists and Constructivists, Eagleton (1976) declares that '...the enduring achievements of these men stand as a living denial of bourgeois criticism's smug assumption that art is one thing and propaganda another' (p.57). Oddly enough, Arnold's single reference to 'propaganda' suggests that he did think that art and propaganda could go together. Writing approvingly of the novelist George Sand (Super VIII) he asserts that 'her own place is of course with the party and propaganda of organic change.' However, he proceeds, with his characteristic sense of balance: 'But George Sand felt the poetry of the past; she had no hatreds; the furies, the follies, the self-deceptions of secularist and revolutionist fanatics filled her with dismay' (p.234). They also filled Arnold with dismay. The need to adapt to, and to promote change was a constant theme of Arnold; but he sought 'organic change' not the bitterness of revolution. Dogmatism, either for the establishment or for revolutionary change, were equally foreign to his way of thought.

Importance of the novel

In discussing Arnold's view of literature we have inevitably tended to concentrate, until the mention of George Sand, on poetry. Arnold's references to the novel are far from prolific, and some of them are decidedly offputting. Writing in Literature and Dogma, for example of 'the lovers of miracle and prediction', Arnold describes them as

like people who have fed their minds on novels or their stomachs on opium; the reality of things is flat and insipid to them, although it is in truth far grander than the phantasmagorical world of novels and of opium. But it is long before the novel-reader or the opium-eater can rid himself of his bad habits, and brace his nerves, and recover the tone of his mind enough to perceive it. Distress and despair at the loss of his accustomed stimulant are his first sensations. (Super VI, p.379)

Novels, for Arnold, like religion for Karl Marx, would appear to be little more than 'the opium of the people'. Geoffrey Tillotson (1951) observes that 'to the last Arnold expected a little too much of the Greeks and not enough of George Eliot' (p.146). This view would, at first sight, appear to be justified when, writing of George Sand (Super X), Arnold asserts that 'the novel is a more superficial form of literature than poetry'. However, he continues - 'but on that very account more attractive' (p.189). Further on still he speaks of her 'ample and noble style' resting upon 'large and lofty qualities', and links her name with his most admired writers:

In the literature of our century, if the work of Goethe is the greatest and wisest influence, if the work of Wordsworth is the purest and most poetic, the most varied and attractive influence is, perhaps, the work of George Sand. (p.189)

Arnold contrasts her with the realist Balzac, whose motive is merely 'curiosity' and compares her own motivation as a writer with that of Shakespeare, Homer and Dante - to 'let the good prevail', presenting 'the life of man in its fulness and greatness' (p.188). He does, then, regard the novel as a source of moral power, a storehouse for the acquisition of values.

Two main reasons account for Arnold's apparent disparagement of the novel as against poetry. One was the plethora of second-rate novelistic

material being produced by the popular press in the mid-Victorian period, much of it sensational, superficial and moralistic in tone. Another was the fact that the giants of the Victorian novel, then coming into its own, who stood head and shoulders above the general run of fictionalisers, were Arnold's contemporaries, and Arnold was loath to offer criticism of the contemporary literary scene: 'No man (he wrote) can trust himself to speak of his own time and his own contemporaries with the same sureness of judgment and the same proportion as of times and men gone by' (Super VIII, p.248). When Arnold does break away from this principle it is a sign of exceptional interest. It is therefore something of a surprise to find him commenting, in an article entitled 'Copyright' (Super IX), on Henry James and 'those charming novels of his which we are all reading' (p.130). In fact, as Kathryn Hanson has shown in an unpublished PhD thesis (1976) Arnold shared with this American novelist 'an intellectual and personal relationship which has had a lasting significance for English and American letters' (p.350). She shows among other things that they shared a 'deep affinity for a broad, disinterested criticism, (and) for moral art which embodied life' (ibid.). Culminating their long friendship Henry James was 'one of the two Americans present at the funeral' of Matthew Arnold (p.xviii).

Again, Arnold writes of 'Count Leo Tolstoi' (Super XI), during his lifetime, describing him as 'a great soul and a great writer' (p.302). On the subject of the novel Anna Karenine Arnold writes of Tolstoi's 'extraordinary fineness of perception...his sincere fidelity to it' and 'the absolute reality of his personages and their doings' (p.285) and develops the theme that the Christian values embodied in Tolstoi's novels are unlikely to be made any more accessible in the more philosophical works to which Tolstoi was beginning to devote the latter part of his life. Arnold praises the delicacy as well as the imaginative penetration of Tolstoi's novel-writing, comparing his discreet handling

of sexual relations in Anna Karenine with what he describes as 'the Lubricity' of Flaubert's Madame Bovary, a 'taint' in the latter's work which he believes 'petrifies feeling'. Of the portrayal of Tolstoi's Karenine he commends 'the treasures of compassion, tenderness, insight, which alone, amid such guilt and misery, can enable charm to subsist and to emerge' (p.293); and of Levine's mental history in the same novel he writes:

Points raised in that history are developed and enforced; there is an abundant and admirable exhibition of knowledge of human nature, penetrating insight, fearless sincerity, wit, sarcasm, eloquence, style... (p.297)

However, there is no explicit moralising in the novel 'no fine sentiment, at once tiresome and false' (p.292) and the reader is free to extract the values implicitly embodied in the complexity of the human relationship presented.

As a final example of Arnold's hidden interest in the novel we turn to an article appearing in the periodical Nineteenth Century in 1881 (Super IX) where Arnold refers to one of Dickens's novels for the first time:

What a pleasure (he writes) to have the opportunity of praising a work so sound, a work so rich in merit, as David Copperfield!...Of the contemporary rubbish which is shot so plentifully all round us, we can, indeed, hardly read too little. But to contemporary work so good as David Copperfield we are in danger of perhaps not paying respect enough, of reading it (for who could help reading it?) too hastily, and then putting it aside for something else and forgetting it. What treasure of gaiety invention, life, are in that book! what alertness and resource! what a soul of good nature and kindness governing the whole!

Arnold's enthusiasm for this 'admirable work' derived in part from his personal experience as School Inspector of establishments typified by Salem House and of 'educators who are more or less like Mr Creakle'. He knew all too well that 'the great mass of the middle part of our community' were 'brought up in establishments of this kind', and he rejoiced in Dickens's exposure of the stunting effects of such misguided 'education'. Some establishments may be exceptionally better than Salem House, and some teachers and pupils escape from Salem House unscathed, or else recover later;

But, on the mass, the training produces with fatal sureness the effect of lowering their standard of life and impairing their civilisation. It helps to produce in them, and it perpetuates, a defective type of religion, a narrow range of intellect and knowledge, a stunted sense of beauty, a low standard of manners. (pp275-6)

In Arnold's description of David Copperfield as 'a charming and instructive book' we have the essential clue to his estimate of the value of literature - the novel as well as poetry; it 'charms' through the embracing magic of its imaginative presentation, and it 'instructs' through the values embedded in the actions portrayed - values which the reader is free to discover, assess, accept or reject at will.

Conclusion

To sum up, literature (or 'letters'), for Arnold, covers a wide range and true culture demands a broad acquaintance with it. Through its implicit criticism of life, literature (of which poetry is the quintessential expression) is a prime source of value acquisition which it achieves almost unconsciously, by an inward, interpretive process. Encountered, as it should be, at its best, it has a moral and spiritual influence - 'religious' in quality, though untrammelled by dogmatic presuppositions. It sustains us by creating satisfying wholes, giving form to the perplexing chaos of experience. Compared with science, literature is relatively autonomous, being bound not by facts but by the credibility of the truths it embodies, which are essentially truths of subjective emotion rather than of cognition of the external world. It is not hostile, but complementary, to science; and we should seek to gain a unified conception of both. In an increasingly scientific and mechanistic world, however, it becomes more and more important to develop the openness and flexibility of mind which a wide acquaintance with literature can promote.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE CONCEPT OF 'DOGMA'

A federation of Christians is inconceivable in which each member retains his own opinions and private judgment in matters of faith.

Pope Pius XI, 1928

Religion...as I now ask you arbitrarily to take it, shall mean for us 'the feelings, acts and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine.

William James: Varieties of Religious Experience, 1902

Men are united by their doubts, but divided by their certainties.

Peter Ustinov, in a Radio broadcast, 1976

A prime value of literature, it has been suggested above, is to 'charm' and 'instruct' at the same time by combining imaginative vision with implicit value judgments 'which the reader is free to discover, assess, accept or reject at will'. Moreover, generally speaking, good literature presents a number of values, often ironically juxtaposed, so that the reader is obliged to make his own discoveries and assessments in order to extricate such values as are personally meaningful to him. This is the fundamental difference between literature and dogma, which must now be considered.

Defining dogma

The Shorter Oxford Dictionary (1933) defines 'dogma' as a 'body of opinion formulated and authoritatively stated; tenets or principles held collectively'. And 'philosophical dogmatism' it defines as 'a system of philosophy based upon principles dictated by reasoning alone; opposite to scepticism. More generally a way of thinking based upon principles which have not been tested by reflection'. The essential features here are that dogma is collectively held opinion, sanctioned by authority, which may be incorporated in a system developed by a priori reasoning closed to sceptical reflection. David Edwards, Canon of Westminster, has recently defined 'dogma' more fully in respect to religion as:

A term of Christian theology, meaning a doctrine claiming authority over

any private opinion or hesitation in a believer's mind. It is held to be a religious truth established by divine revelation and defined by the Church. If the believer rejects it, he becomes to that extent a heretic. The term is applied specially to the decrees, mainly about Christology, of the Ecumenical Councils of the Church (325-787)... (Bullock and Stallybrass, 1977, p.179)

Canon Edwards then distinguishes between Roman Catholic emphasis on Papal authority and Protestant emphasis on the authority of the Bible before adding the significant observation, coming as it does from a dignitary of the Church of England, that 'in religion as in other fields, the term is today mostly used pejoratively, to mean an opinion held on grounds, and propagated by methods, which are unreasonable' (ibid.). This shift of opinion within the Church would have delighted Arnold who saw 'orthodox divinity' as 'an immense literary misapprehension' (Super VI, p.276) because:

Dogmatic theology is an attempt at both literary and scientific criticism of the highest order; and the age which developed dogma had neither the resources nor the faculty for such a criticism. (Super VI, p.345)

Lord Salisbury had disquieted Arnold by declaring the common contemporary assumption of the Church that 'religion is no more to be severed from dogma than light from the sun' (Super VI, p.279). Arnold's contention was that 'dogma' and 'true doctrine' are far from synonymous; the current dogma was a 'false criticism' conflating facts and assumptions. 'Learned pseudo-science applied to the data of the Bible is best called plainly what it is, - utter blunder' (Super VI, p.384) he wrote in Literature and Dogma, and 'to try to tinker such criticism only makes matters worse... The hour for softening down, and explaining away, is passed; the whole notion-work has to go' (ibid.). The quality of our religion must be judged on the basis of our psychological experience not on the degree of our adherence to theological authority (Super VI, p.73). No series of maxims, not even, for example, the Sermon on the Mount is to be exhibited as the ultimate sum and formula of Christianity. Christianity, and scriptural writings related to it, are a source, not a bond.

Dogma distinguished from principles

However, as Arnold writes in Literature and Science,

everyone knows how we seek naturally to combine the pieces of our knowledge together, to bring them under general rules, to relate them to principles (my italics, RGA); and how unsatisfactory and tiresome it would be to go on for ever...accumulating items of fact which must stand isolated. (Super X, pp62-63)

Why then should not the facts of Christianity be brought together in the form of jointly acceptable dogma? Firstly, because the 'facts' (as distinct from the ideas or individual beliefs) can now scarcely be positively known - 'the truth on these matters is something so relative' - and secondly, because by fixing them in a system we lose the fluidity, the 'spontaneity of consciousness' that enables us to gather freely from our interpretation of them the nourishment we need. We must distinguish at this point between 'dogma' and 'principles'; dogma makes a demand upon us (intellectually and emotionally); a principle invites our interest and concern. This view comes out clearly in Arnold's discussion of Emerson, of whom he writes:

He is the friend and aider of those who would live in the spirit. All the points in thinking which are necessary for this purpose he takes; but he does not combine them into a system, or present them as a regular philosophy. Combined in a system...they would be less useful than as Emerson gives them to us...(Super X, p.177)

The 'points' Emerson makes (or the principles he adumbrates) are 'true and fruitful' if understood in a certain high sense' (ibid.). In other words the responsibility for apprehension and interpretation rests with the individual reader.

Karl Popper (1966) makes an observation (in connection with the doctrine of equality) which is helpful here. "Equality before the law" is not a fact but a political demand based upon a moral decision; and it is quite independent of the theory - which is probably false - that "all men are born equal" (p.234). Popper's view, as a rational humanitarian, is of course in favour of adopting the principle of 'equality before the law' as a principle inviting our moral allegiance. A further example of this important distinction can be given by reference to a

sample of dogma, or its modern equivalent, 'ideology', taken from the writing of Lenin:

When people have become accustomed to observe the fundamental principles of social life and their labour is so productive that they will voluntarily work according to their abilities...there will be no need of any exact calculation of the quantity of products to be distributed to each of its members; each will take freely 'according to his needs'. (quoted in Niebuhr, 1963, p.194)

Admirable as the vision may be, it is essentially a dogma, since although it is expressed authoritatively as a fact, it is cast in the unverifiable domain of the future. It can be compared however with the principle incorporated in the well-known dictum: 'From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs', which simply invites our moral allegiance without demanding it. To take a further step we can move from dogma, through principle, to the expression of the same idea in literature, for example in the parable of the 'Labourers in the Vineyard' (Matthew XIX, 30-XX, 16) or the parable of the 'Last Judgment' (Matthew XXV). In these literary presentations the 'ideal to aim at and govern practice' signified in the principle above is given a concrete human dimension by its embodiment in character and narrative.

Arnold's aversion to dogma

Arnold's abhorrence of dogma is manifest in his life and writing in numerous instances. His aversion to the Thirty-nine Articles is referred to in chapter 10 (p.263); and Edward Walford tells us that at Balliol Arnold 'used to say that the strict imposition of creeds had done more to break than to unite churches and nations and families' (Chambers, 1947, p.6). His close friend, Arthur Clough (we are told in the same work) 'resigned his Fellowship and Tutorship at Oriel in 1848 as a result of recurring scruples about the obligation of subscription to the 39 Articles imposed upon University men' (p.26) at that time. In Culture and Anarchy, Arnold balances the Hellenic virtue of the 'free spontaneous flow of consciousness' against the Hebrew virtue of 'strictness of conscience' (with its inherent danger of rigid and unthinking

dogmatic adherence to rules). He objects in the same work to Mr Frederic Harrison's Jacobinism. 'with its fierceness, and its addiction to an abstract system' (Super V, p.109).* On the other hand he delighted in the fact that French schools were largely undenominational (Super II, p.83) and so freed from the pressures of religious dogmatism. His metaphorical objection to 'machinery' is in the same vein:

Faith in machinery is, I said, our besetting danger; often in machinery most absurdly disproportioned to the end which this machinery, if it is to do any good at all, is to serve; but always in machinery, as if it had a value in and for itself. What is freedom but machinery? what is population but machinery? what is coal but machinery? what is wealth but machinery? what are even religious organizations but machinery? (Super V, p.96)

'What', he might have added, 'is dogma, but machinery?'

Occasionally Arnold lapses into dogmatism himself: 'Miracles do not happen,' is surely a dogmatic statement - though for most of us, perhaps, more readily verifiable from experience than its contrary. At least he tried not to dogmatise. He was concerned when his sister Jane thought his third Oxford Professional lecture on Homer 'too dogmatic' in tone, and later in the published introduction to his inaugural lecture in the Poetry Chair he apologizes for the style 'which is that of the doctor rather than that of the explorer,...a style which I have long since learned to abandon' (Chambers, 1947, p.70).

Support for dogma

To return to Church dogma, however, there was no shortage of voices in Arnold's day to support it. Cardinal Newman, whom in other respects Arnold admired, saw dogma as the vital centre of religion, writing in Apologia Pro Vita Sua (1864, p.11):

From the age of fifteen, dogma has been the fundamental principle of my religion. I know of no other religion; I cannot enter into the idea of any other sort of religion; religion, as a mere sentiment, is to me a dream and a mockery.

*Oddly enough, the orthodox Quarterly Review regarded Arnold himself as a representative of Jacobinism!

Faith, for Newman, was 'in its very nature, the acceptance of what our reason cannot reach, simply and absolutely upon testimony', a view with which Arnold strongly disagrees (Super VI, p.347) because it provides (for others, of not Newman) an open passport for unexamined dogma.

Among the reviews of Arnold's Literature and Dogma, comes a spirited defence of religious dogma:

For what are dogmas, after all, but men's highest thoughts about religion - the thoughts of the Church formulated and set down in order respecting those Divine relations out of which all religion comes, and into which, when we make it a subject of reflection it always runs. (Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine, vol CXIII, no. DCXCII, June 1873, p.684)

From another angle, Thomas Carlyle (writing in relation to Chartism) supplies a powerful supporting argument for dogmatism: 'Surely' (he writes) 'of all "rights of man", this right of the ignorant man to be guided by the wiser, to be gently or forcibly, held in the true course by him, is the indisputablest'. This is probably the most pervasive argument presented in favour of dogma, although (pace Carlyle) not the least disputable. R H Thouless (1951) provides a better argument in its support:

Every religion has a systematised body of beliefs (its dogma); a system of emotional reactions to the objects of these beliefs; and its system of ways of behavior (the religious rite). All three of these are organically connected together. Religious dogma is not merely a set of intellectual propositions; it is also a statement of the possibility of religious ways of feeling and of the effectiveness of religious modes of behavior, and it cannot be understood properly unless considered in conjunction with these ways of feeling and behaving. (p.406)

Thouless points out that the individual's religion, including its dogma, is 'largely taken over (by the process of group suggestion) from his social environment; but that for each individual an experiential and a rational element are brought to bear on the system (most probably at adolescence) so that the 'system is accepted and modified or totally rejected according to how far it satisfies the requirements of these influences' (p.407). However, as he points out later, 'We should not invite people to accept a spiritual interpretation of the universe merely because such a belief will make them more moral, happier, or better

adjusted; it is to be accepted only if we believe it to be true' (p.409).

A view which accords closely with Arnold's.

A criticism sometimes levelled against Arnold (as against other liberal critics) is that he is liable to accept or reject scriptural material item by item to suit his own presuppositions and theories. It would be better, it is argued, to accept the Canon as a whole. This argument can readily be countered by querying whether the acceptance as a whole of the scriptural canon (to suit the presuppositions involved in accepting it) in the face of internal and external evidence to the contrary is any more valid. Surely the sharing of presuppositions by more people does not in itself make them more valid; any more than their sharing by fewer people makes them less valid.

Opposition to Christian dogmatism and its effects

An argument against Christian dogma occurs - from a quite different standpoint - in J S Mill's On Liberty (1859) where he writes that

Its ideal is negative rather than positive, passive rather than active: Innocence rather than Nobleness; Abstinence from Evil rather than energetic Pursuit of Good; in its precepts...'thou shalt not' predominates unduly over 'thou shalt'. In its horror of sensuality, it made an idol of asceticism which has been gradually compromised away into one of legality. (Klingopulos, 1964, pp.45-46)

The negativeness Mill objected to was sometimes all too evident in the contemporary scene. Witness the Manifesto drawn up by E B Pusey in answer to the liberal churchmen's publication Essays and Reviews (1860). The liberals (Frederick Temple, Benjamin Jowett and others) had queried the damnatory clause of the Athanasian Creed among other things. In answer, E B Pusey and 11,000 clergymen signed a Manifesto (1864) as follows:

We, the undersigned presbyters and deacons in holy orders in the Church of England and Ireland, feel it to be our bounden duty to the Church and to the souls of men to declare our firm belief that the Church, in common with the whole Catholic Church...teaches, in the words of our Blessed Lord, that the "punishment" of the "cursed" equally with the "life" of the "righteous" is "everlasting".

Six years later the Roman Catholic Church went further than this in its promotion and support of religious dogma by promulgating in July 1870 the Doctrine of Papal Infallibility, by which the Pope's official teaching was

thenceforth to be regarded as divinely inspired authority.

The personal and social effects of the contemporary emphasis on dogma were varied. Doubtless there were many in a changing social and intellectual climate who found comfort and security in the authority of Church dogma. But this was by no means universal. Beatrice Webb, for example, writes in My Apprenticeship (1938) how she felt at 14 that 'intellectual difficulties of faith make it impossible to believe. I am very, very wicked; I feel (as) if Christ can never listen to me again' (p.83). Such troubled personal sentiments find expression in numerous diaries of the period. At the social-political level, the conflict finds expression in legal enactments. Even ten years after the appearance of Literature and Dogma, the Editor of the Freethinker, George William Fook, was sentenced in March 1883 by Sir Hardinge Gifford, Q.C. (afterwards Lord Halsbury) to twelve months imprisonment for blasphemy. In the judge's eyes if (among other things) 'by writing, or verbally, anyone denies the existence of the Deity, or denies the providence of God' this itself constituted blasphemy. In passing sentence the judge expressed his regret that 'a man gifted by God with such great ability, should have chosen to prostitute his talents to the services of the Devil'. (Bonner, 1934)

The demise of dogmatic credence within the Church

No doubt events such as this helped to set in motion the steady demise of credence in Christian dogma which the past century has witnessed. Arnold's Literature and Dogma expressed a malaise that was being experienced by a good many questioning but conscientious minds. George Eliot, who had translated Strauss's theological work, wrote in a letter to her orthodox father of her respect for Christ's teaching, but confessed that she found the theological doctrines surrounding him pernicious. Lord Tennyson in In Memoriam expressed an increasingly common sentiment when he wrote that

There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds...

Thomas Huxley, discussing science and immortality, in a letter to Charles Kingsley (September 23, 1860) adopted a totally open-minded stance: 'I neither deny or affirm the immortality of man. I see no reason for believing in it, but, on the other hand, I have no means of disbelieving it.' By 1888, the year of Arnold's death, many scientific minds had swung completely away from Christian dogma. H G Wells, for example, asks:

How did we see the world in '88? Time had opened out for us, and the Creation, the Fall of Man and the Flood, those simple fundamentals of the Judeo-Christian mythology, had vanished. For ever. Instead I saw a limitless universe throughout which the stars and nebulae were scattering like dust, and I saw life ascending, as it seemed, from nothingness towards the stars. (Wells, 1946, p.13)

This is not the place to trace in detail the winnowing process that Christian dogma experienced within the Church, interesting as it is, especially in the acceleration which took place in this century under the influence, for example, of Braithwaite's Empiricist's View of the Nature of Religious Language (1955), Van Buren's The Secular Meaning of the Gospels (1963) (with its similarly linguistic preoccupations), and Bultmann's work (1958) 'demythologizing' scriptural literature. John Robinson, the Bishop of Woolwich's, Honest to God (1963) was the popular climax of the process in England, and John Hick's The Myth of God Incarnate⁽¹⁹⁷⁷⁾, a recent, more advanced development by a group of theologians writing in a similar strain, incorporates close parallels to Arnold's views on the language of religion.

A century after the publication of Literature and Dogma, the Guardian (26/4/73) published some figures from a Report of the Anglican Consultative Council which claimed 32.5 million nominal members of the Church of England in the United Kingdom. The latest figure available for Easter communicants, however, was 1,814,000, suggesting a real, active membership of some 5 per cent of the community. On the other hand a Sunday Times Opinion Research Centre poll (quoted in the same article) showed that 'only 18 per cent of those questioned regard themselves as unbelievers or don't know: and even in the age group 16-24, where religious affinities

have been assumed to be vanishing, 17 per cent had said a prayer the day before. Of this group alone 57 per cent held some form of religious belief.' The leader writer suggests that it may be that 'the majority of British people who profess a religious belief are undecided about what it is and do not wish to have to declare it in specific formularies'. They may even welcome a degree of archaism in religious language 'to disguise their own imprecision of feeling'. The final paragraph of the article is a significant comment on the attitude to religious dogma generally prevalent in the United Kingdom today:

Persons can (1) believe in God and His continued sustenance of the universe; (2) believe that Christ's teaching, if followed, would lead to a kinder world and a happier individual; (3) believe that the natural laws were suspended for Christ's incarnation and death; (4) believe that we inhabit a spiritual as well as a material world and that, for example, prayer has its own incomprehensible efficacy. It is a rare man nowadays who accepts all four of these propositions. It would probably turn out to be a very usual man who held one, two, or three. By making a requirement of church membership acceptance of the whole canon, and in words which allow no reservations, the Church of England may exclude many who would like an affinity with the Church and in general assent to what it says and does. (The Guardian, 26/4/73)

Such is the view of A N Whitehead (1954) who wrote that 'it is death to religion to insist on a premature stage of precision', adding the ironic comment that 'the vitality of religion is shown by the way in which the religious spirit has survived the ordeal of religious education' (p.50). That was in 1929. The Guardian's statistics suggest that in certain indefinable respects it is still surviving. In America from time to time there are even occasional, though quite vigorous, campaigns, to turn the clock back and 'bring back the religious creation theory into science teaching' (see, e.g. Times Educational Supplement (9/3/73)). However, leaving aside such extreme proposals, it is probably true to say with Canon H C Luce (1960) that within the Church 'the relevance of Christ today depends on what he was and what he taught rather on miracles or dogma'.

Ideology: the new dogma

So far the discussion has been conducted virtually on the basis that dogma is a phenomenon confined to the Christian Church. But this is far

from the case. Under the name of ideology it continues to take innumerable forms within the multitudinous '-isms' current in the modern world - Marxism, Communism, Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Racism, Behaviorism, and so on (almost) ad infinitum. (It is not suggested that all '-isms' are always dogmatic; but that there is generally in each of them a dogmatic or ideological strain promoted by at least some of its adherents.)

According to Daniel Bell (Bullock and Stallybrass, 1977) the word 'ideology...has been variously used to characterize ideas, ideals, beliefs, passions, values, Weltanschauungen, religions, political philosophies (and) moral justifications'. It signifies therefore (in John Plamenatz' words) 'a family of concepts'. Bell points out Mannheim's distinction between 'particular' ideologies (based on the united self-interest of specific groups within a community in respect to a particular shared concern, e.g. that of 'small businessmen') and 'total ideologies' or Weltanschauungen characterising 'complete commitments to a way of life' (ibid.). He also quotes Lionel Trilling who, as an Arnoldian scholar, is of particular interest here. In Trilling's view ideology is the habit of showing respect for certain formulas to which, for various reasons having to do with emotional safety, we have very strong ties of whose meaning and consequence in actuality we have no clear understanding. (Trilling, 1950)

It is in this sense, virtually identical to dogma, that I wish to discuss ideology here.

Such ideological formulas, bidding for unquestioning adherence in return for emotional security, are often systematically linked with a measure of what Arnold called Aberglaube (or extra-belief). As an example, in place of the Victorian Christian Aberglaube -

'And the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
As the waters cover the sea...'

we have the Marxist-Communist Aberglaube of Utopian predictions based on 'economic-historical necessity'. Presuppositions of this kind creep into Marxist criticism almost unnoticed. Eagleton (1976) provides a fairly recent sample:

The social relations of feudalism...become an obstacle to capitalism's development of the productive forces, and are burst asunder by it; the social relations of capitalism in turn impede the full development and proper distribution of the wealth of industrial society, and will be destroyed by socialism. (p.61)

I have italicized the element of unverifiable prediction which in conjunction with its authoritative tone characterizes ideological dogma.

Lukacs (1962) provides an example in a slightly different vein::

Today's historical novel has arisen and is developing amid the dawn of a new history. This applies not only to the Soviet Union where the tempestuous development and vigorous construction of Socialism have produced the highest form of democracy in human history, Socialist democracy... (p.344)

Here the ideological value judgment I have italicized in the second sentence would be difficult, or impossible, to verify; and the momentous time-division implicit in the first sentence exhibits and demands a measure of Aberglaube to be appreciated. Ideological presuppositions no doubt permeate most literary criticism, at one level or another, but the Marxist literary criticism of Lukacs (despite its many excellencies) readily exemplifies a number of the traces of potted ideological thinking characteristic of this genre. He writes, for example, of 'Scott's exceptional and revolutionary epic gifts' (ibid.); the literary path of Walter Pater, however, 'leads indirectly but surely into imperialist decadence...' (p.246) We learn that 'even in socialist reality capitalist prose is still a factor to be reckoned with' (p.348); and that elsewhere 'the historical novel of our day, despite the great talent of its best exponents, still suffers in many respects from the remnants of the harmful and still not entirely vanquished legacy of bourgeois decadence' (p.17).

Before examining some of the effects of this kind of ideological thinking it is necessary to look briefly at its counterpart on the other side of the ideological fence. A pamphlet produced by Dr Frank Buchman's Moral Re-Armament movement in the early 1960's provides copious examples. Here is a typical sample of two-valued orientation characteristic of ideological thinking:

There are two ideologies bidding for the world today. One is Moral

Re-Armament, which believes that God's Mind should control the world through human nature that has been changed; the other is Communism, which believes that man's mind should control the world through human nature that has been exploited. One or the other must win. (p.1)

Moral Re-Armament believes that 'Only a new spirit in men can bring a new spirit in industry' with 'national service replacing selfishness' and 'industrial planning based upon the guidance of God'. According to Dr Buchman, 'When labour, management and capital become partners under God's guidance, then industry takes its true place in national life' (p.13). Thus united, 'every man can know the immediate action he can and must take' (ibid.). As well as neatly solving all industrial problems, this ideology meets the needs of the military sector:

If the free world is not to be out-manoeuvred by this new and very powerful weapon, ideology, we must meet the enemy on his own ground and with the same weapons. That weapon is Moral Re-Armament. If we can unite the ideological and military factors we will have a real defence of freedom. We will achieve peace and be able to build a new world. (p.18)

According to Moral Re-Armament the 'only way' to deal with 'such a corrosive thing' as Communism is 'with an ideology diametrically opposed' (p.31). This ideology provides 'fresh faith that free men with God's guidance and only with God's guidance will yet re-make the world and achieve lasting justice and an honourable peace for all men' (ibid.).

The Aberglaube in this needs no stressing nearly two decades later. It is, however, tempting to clutch for emotional security to sharply-cut lines of thought and action such as Moral Re-Armament proposes; and difficult to sort out the genuine elements for concern in relation to its opposite ideology centred on Moscow from the less genuine promotion of immediate material benefit to investors in the industrial-military complex linked conveniently with the Pentagon. It would be helpful, perhaps, if the pamphlet gave advice on how to distinguish 'God's guidance' from Dr Buchman's.

It is sometimes possible, by hindsight, to find classical examples of ideological Aberglaube. This is true of a pamphlet, 1966 In Review, published by the United States Information Service, the text of which begins:

When historians one day chronicle the Vietnam conflict they are likely to write that 1966 was the year in which the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese armies lost the initiative, their momentum and any chance of winning the war. (p.3)

Whatever the phrase 'winning a war' may mean philosophically, it is clear (a decade or so later) that, politically, this piece of ideological Aberglaube failed to materialize.

Some effects of dogmatic thinking in the modern world

With modern ideology as with Victorian dogma the mere personal allegiance to a dogmatic system of one kind or another is not a matter of great concern. The individualizing process described by Thouless (p.208) above) comes into effect without necessarily incurring harm to others. There may even be a benificent aura shed on society as a result of an individual's dogmatic adherence, as when in the early seventies of this century the late Bishop of Gloucester (the modern counterpart of Arnold's butt) 'asked people to pray for rain' in order to prevent an all-white South African cricket tour, in accordance with his anti-racist principles coupled with a particular conception of the nature of prayer. There is a dogmatic element in the Bishop's conception of prayer in that it would be difficult to verify its efficacy (since, for example, others may have been praying for sunshine). However, it must be assumed that the Diety would approve the message (its being in line with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) even if events failed to sanction the medium.

But there is a big difference between adopting a dogmatic system for oneself - be it Christian or Communist - and imposing it upon others by political, legal or social sanctions. Inquisitions, sackings and internments are among the bitter fruits of imposed ideologies. At perhaps the milder level of such sanctions a report from Rome in The Guardian (17/10/73) tells of the transfer of a primary school teacher 'from one Milan school to another because she had refused to teach religious education or to attend lessons given to her class by an outside "specialist in religion"'. She is reported to have said in her defence: 'I believe

in the teachings of the Gospel, but I'm embarrassed to hear the recitation of laws and dogmas which are used like policemen regulating traffic'.

(A sentiment virtually identical with that expressed by George Eliot a century ago (see p.210 above), and of course close to Arnold's point of view.)

More alarming, of course, was the hounding of Communists in the USA during the McCarthy era in the 1950's, and the contemporary internment of Soviet dissenters in mental hospitals. Arthur Miller's play, The Crucible, is a powerful example of literature in opposition to the dogma of McCarthyism - of historical symbolism indicting neo-contemporary fact. The 'Samizdat', or private underground publication system in the USSR, is a continuing indictment of the political-ideological suppression of liberal Soviet writers. A Guardian article (18.11.75) based on an Amnesty International Report, Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR: their treatment and conditions (1975) reported that there are

at least 10,000 political and religious prisoners in the Soviet Union today, and the 120 people known outside the Soviet Union to have been confined in psychiatric hospitals for political reasons are 'only a fraction' of the total number of prisoners treated in this way.

When consulted about this report, Mr Lev Smirnov, the Chairman of the Soviet Supreme Court, refused to discuss "what you call a book that is vulgar falsification and defamation of Soviet reality and Socialist legitimacy". To detail accounts from the Amnesty International Report and from a similar brief report The Internment of Soviet Dissenters in Mental Hospitals (Mee, 1971) would make a sorry catalogue of suffering which it is not the object of this thesis to undertake; but one or two items from the latter report will serve to put the ideological problem in perspective.

The Constitution of the USSR, Article 123, states that:

In conformity with the interests of the workers, and in order to strengthen the Socialist order, the law guarantees the citizens of the USSR:

- (a) Freedom of speech,
- (b) Freedom of the press,
- (c) Freedom of association and assembly,
- (d) Freedom to hold processions and demonstrations in the street..(Mee, 1971, p. 1.)

This article is basically in line with Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, a problem arises in cases of political or social dissent from what is regarded as the norm of Socialist ideology. Dissent from a norm is, by (rigid) definition 'abnormality', which by extension is equated with 'madness'. If this is regarded as a danger to the social fabric, incarceration and 'psychiatric treatment' are said to be justified. In the words of N. Krushchev, quoted in Pravda (24 May, 1959):

A crime is a deviation from the generally recognized standards of behavior, frequently caused by mental disorder. Can there be any diseases, mental disorders, among certain men in communist society? Evidently there can be. If that is so, then there can be delinquencies characteristic of people of an abnormal mind. (quoted in Mee, 1971, p.1.)

'Special' psychiatric hospitals, in close cooperation with the K.G.B. are believed to be appropriate establishments for the treatment of such disorders' and 'delinquencies'. The privately circulated 'Samizdat'

Chronicle for June 1969 affirms that:

All these "special" psychiatric hospitals have the following features in common:- political prisoners, although of sound mind, are kept in the same wards as seriously disturbed psychiatric patients (who may have committed...murder, rape, thuggery); if they will not renounce their convictions they are subjected, on the pretext of treatment, to physical torture, to injections of large doses of 'aminazine' and 'sul-fazine', which cause depressive shock reactions and serious physical disorders' (quoted in Mee, 1971) p.4)

(Details of these physical disorders, and of physical and mental tortures inflicted under the guise of treatment are then given in the report.

Also extracts from a number of case histories.) A liberal Soviet Communist Ivan Yakhimovich, of unexceptionably correct background, was concerned at the trial of Galanskov and Ginsburg and others, and at ideological suppression of 'samizdat', and wrote a letter to the Central Committee of the CPSU calling for the extension of freedom of publication:

One should not undermine the confidence of the masses in the Party (he wrote)... "Samizdat" can be abolished in only one way: by developing democratic rights, not by strangling them; by respecting the Constitution and not by violating it; by putting into practice the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to which Vishynsky agreed on behalf of our State and not by putting it under an extinguisher. (quoted by Mee, 1971, p.13)

Two months later (March 13, 1968) 'he was expelled from the party' and

dismissed from his post'. A year later he was arrested, and 'on April 1st, 1969, he underwent an out-patient psychiatric examination'.

'Extracts from the Doctors' statements describing his condition' include the following observations:

According to objective information he often took part in meetings with critical remarks about various questions sometimes of an original, irrelevant and trifling nature. In January 1968 the patient became involved in the spread of slanderous fabrications, smearing the Soviet government and the social system. In March 1968, on account of this, he was excluded from the Party and dismissed from his post as chairman of the collective farm. However, the patient continued to spread scandalous fabrications and wrote essays and letters in similar vein... The patient does not deny his guilt and considers himself to be in good health...He underestimates his actions, not understanding their treacherous, criminal character.
...Preliminary diagnosis of the commission: Schizophrenia, paranoid syndrome? (quoted in Mee, 1971, p.14)

A significant response to this manifestation of collective ideology emerges from a later diagnostic statement emanating from the Serbsky Institute:

In his depositions when interrogated the patient pointed out that in his actions he pursued only one aim, the triumph of truth, for truth 'must be worked out with our own brains, must be felt in our own hearts, by every cell of the body'. The patient ended his testimony with a poem by Yevtushenko...(quoted in Mee, 1971*, p.15)

The subjectivity of 'literary truth' is seen here in determined opposition to the 'collective objectivity' of an ideological Weltanschauung.

To quote briefly from just one other case: after Vladimir Borisov had 'signed an appeal to the United Nations in May 1969, and a letter in defence of Grigorenko' he was 'subjected to psychiatric examination'. At his subsequent trial 'it was stated that the "samizdat" in his possession, and his signatures to protest letters could only be regarded as evidence of mental disorder or hooliganism' (Chronicle, December 1969, quoted in Mee, 1971, p.16).

This brief, but necessary, excursion into some of the effects of enforced political ideology raises the question asked by one of the characters in George Orwell's novel, Nineteen Eighty-Four:

*At this date Yakhimovich was in Riga City Psychiatric Hospital.

For after all, how do we know that two and two make four? Or that the force of gravity works? Or that the past is unchangeable? If both the past and the external world exist only in the mind, and if the mind itself is controllable - what then? (Orwell, 1962, p.84)

Perhaps 'the mind itself' is 'controllable'; perhaps not. Education, as I understand it, works on the basis that it is not; that it can, and should, be nourished, but not controlled. However, the tendency of the human mind to seek security and imposed order in periods of tension and anxiety (as for example during adolescence) must be recognized as a constant danger to the development of autonomy. To quote W D Wall (1977):

Certain systems of education have exploited this tendency by continuous indoctrination coupled with a dominant leadership. The drive to self-actualization and the quest for a sense of worth make any clear-cut system, which offers security in return for loyalty, deeply seductive in adolescence when so much else seems uncertain. The disturbed, the unsatisfied, the maladjusted and the unstable, are particularly prone to see in authoritarian philosophies, religious or political systems the refuge of casting the burden of decision, and of guilt, upon others. But the mentally healthy also search for an interpretation and a discipline which will integrate their own lives and may for a time accept such solutions as a respite. (p.59)

Seductive as it may seem, no such interpretation and discipline is an adequate substitute for a genuine education for autonomy.

Some of the manifestations and effects of both Christian and Communist indoctrination have been indicated in this chapter, which is essentially a plea for open-ended education. Closed-mindedness issues from the assumption that things are known and certain, or at least unquestionable, when they may well be in fact temerarious, unverifiable and open to question. Soviet Communist ideology works on the basis that Utopia already exists in 'Soviet realism' when it is a far off, distant ideal. Christian theological dogma assumes knowledge of the universe and its Maker and workings that in the present state of man's knowledge are far from verifiable and often down-right misleading. Both cramp the human spirit and cripple the working of creative imagination and empathy. They pretend to a scientific objectivity which is illusory; and so instead of forwarding the development of potential benefits for mankind they stifle it with error.

Advocates of dogma and ideological adherence claim its social and spiritual efficacy, the benefits of emotional security and correct orientation it gives to the individual in his search for a world-view to give meaning to his life. Perhaps this is true for some. But there is ample evidence pointing in another direction - to a different conclusion. In this alternative view, dogma is the Procrustean bed of the human spirit; literature, on the other hand, born of the unconfinable imagination, seeks to nourish and expand its scope. Dogma is afraid of mystery, fearful of the unknown. Literature, impervious to mystery, can even relish it; and can apprehend the numinous without feeling the need to pin it down. It complements the exact, verifiable knowledge which science provides for our physical benefit with a wise tentativeness in the exploration of meaning and motive which our spiritual and emotional well-being require.

CHAPTER NINE

THE CONCEPT OF 'ZEITGEIST'

Time moves, and Opinion moves with it; moves today, how fast, how sweepingly!

Matthew Arnold, St Paul and Protestantism, 1870

We are sharply cut off from our predecessors. A shift in the scale - the sudden slip of masses held in position for ages - has shaken the fabric from top to bottom, alienated us from the past and made us perhaps too vividly conscious of the present. Every day we find ourselves doing saying, or thinking things that would have been impossible to our fathers.

Virginia Woolf, The Common Reader, 1938

...The most interesting feature of curriculum studies is that as society changes the curriculum will also need to change. There is no master plan which will work in all societies at all times.

Denis Lawton, Social Change, Education Theory and Curriculum Planning, 1973

This chapter aims to define and explore the concept of Zeitgeist (or Time-Spirit) which permeates Arnold's Literature and Dogma. It considers Arnold's varied uses of the term and examines its peculiar significance and relevance in the modern world. Certain aspects of science, religion and literature in turn are considered in relation to the Zeitgeist. Some attention is also given to a complementary concept, Weltanschauung (or World-View), not used by Arnold, although its significance is implicit in all his writings of this period. It is suggested that the 'open' world-view of art, advocated by Arnold, is a means of transcending the tensions of clashing dogmas in an age of change. Finally Arnold's optimistic Weltanschauung is subjected to criticism in the light of Albert Schweitzer's world-view which seems better adapted to the demands of the Zeitgeist as we experience it today.

Definition of 'Zeitgeist', and Arnold's uses of the term

The Shorter Oxford Dictionary gives as its definition of 'Zeitgeist': 'the thought or feeling peculiar to a generation or period'; the American Random House Dictionary offers: 'the spirit of the time, general trend of thought or feeling characteristic of a particular period of time' and The New English Dictionary suggests: 'the spirit or genius which marks the thought or feeling of a period or age'. All these three definitions are essentially

static; the only words implying a dynamic or influential aspect are 'trend' and 'genius', respectively: but on the whole these definitions suggest a synchronic rather than a diachronic concept, a contemporary point of view rather than a moving power to be reckoned with. Fraser Neiman (1957) shows that Arnold's uses of the term change from ^astatic to a dynamic sense:

Like the operations of the Zeitgeist, neither Arnold's meanings for the figure nor his intentions in using it are constant. In particular, there appear to be two periods - that of the letters to Clough and that of the writings on Church and Bible - when Arnold favours the word. But a wide gulf separates the meanings. In the one period, Zeitgeist will, I think, be found to be the temper of the times, with the additional idea that time is a local, changeable phenomenon opposing eternal values; in the other, Zeitgeist is an aspect of the eternal, promoting change as a manifestation of its own being. (p.979) (my italics, RA)

Or as Neiman adds a little later, 'the term that in 1848 expressed the dullness of the world to be overcome expresses in the 1860's the plastic stress itself' (ibid., p.932). However, at all stages, Neiman points out, the term 'Zeitgeist' is used by Arnold as a 'figure', a symbol or metaphor, which enables him in his polemical and pragmatic tasks to convey his own ideas on mutability at the same time as suggesting 'an extramundane force ordering the change in accordance with some law' (ibid., p.984). At times this extramundane force seems to be the product of human intellect and reason, at times a kind of divine urge - a transcendental agency of intellectual change' (p.992); but in all cases it is bound up inextricably with the development of human thought:

The life of humanity appears to grow, on the side of intellect, as more and more areas of belief are validated, or rejected, by reason. Divinity manifests itself in so far as this process is discernable. The Time-Spirit is a name for divinity thus manifesting itself, not through its other channel, conscience, but through the history of the human mind. (Neiman, 1957, p.992)

Here Neiman correctly indicates Arnold's tendency to separate conscience as private, individual and intuitive from the more general and public development of human reason. It is the public embodiment of reason which Arnold seems to express through anthropomorphic metaphors: 'slowly does the Zeit-Geist unveil it', 'the "Zeit-Geist"...discovers it to us', 'the Time-Spirit has not then turned his light' are among the numerous

metaphors of intellectual flux adopted by Arnold in Literature and Dogma.

Arnold's sense of historical change, of the new spirit of evolution, was derived in part from the 'higher criticism' emanating from Germany (with which his father, Thomas Arnold, had been much engaged); but in particular perhaps, as Louis Bonnerot (1947) contends, Matthew Arnold's conception of the idea of evolution derives powerfully from his intellectual mentor, Goethe:

C'est...a ce dernier, qu'Arnold L'emprunta et c'est du Zeit-Geist, du Time-Spirit, c'est-a-dire de la loi^{de} developpement et du changement, qu'Arnold fit le principe central de sa philosophie religieuse, parce qu'il la trouva en conformite avec sa notion intuitive de mouvant. Tout en etablissant que l'essence de la vie religieuse, est la morale et l'emotion, Arnold se vit force de reconnaitre que les idees intellectuelles apportant a la religion une importante contribution. Or ces idees, toutes les idees, sont le domaine du changement, "the dominion of the Time-Spirit". Elles sont relatives et non absolues. (p.248)

In addition to the suggestion that Arnold's sensitivity to change was 'intuitive', Bonnerot makes two important observations here; first, regarding Arnold's concern that religion needs to be in step with intellectual life generally; and secondly, that this involves a relativistic approach to religious ideas and a dismissal of the authority of absolutism. The Zeitgeist, seen as here in evolutionary terms, is a demonic - or divine - power sweeping through human history with a dynamic power to which human minds and institutions must adjust, or perish through their failure to do so.

The significance of the 'Zeitgeist' concept in the modern world

Arnold was supremely conscious of the accelerating pace of life. (In his poetry his response to this tended to be pessimistic; later, in his prose, his apprehension of change is expressed more optimistically.) In 'The Scholar Gipsy' he speaks of 'this strange disease of modern life,/With its sick hurry, its divided aims' (Allott, 1965, p.342), and in another poem, 'The Future', he laments that

...repose has fled
For ever the course of the river of Time.
That cities will crowd to its edge
In blacker incessanter line;
That the din will be more on its banks
Denser the trade on its stream... (ibid., p.266)

-and so on. The Zeitgeist is in one sense the intellectual concomitant, partly cause and partly effect, of the technological revolution. As one accelerates the other must follow suit, so that as the pace of their mutual interaction increases change becomes the rule rather than the exception in men's life style. To understand the significance of the Zeitgeist today is to understand the qualitative change in life brought about by this dynamic acceleration. It is no longer a case of 'plus ca change plus c'est la meme chose', because many of the changes over the last century are fundamental, and their effects are cumulative. 'It is only when one specifies the nature of the process that the contrast between past and present change becomes clear', writes Margaret Mead (1972) in a recent study of the generation gap; and she continues: 'One urgent problem is the delineation of the nature of change in the modern world, including its speed and dimensions, so that we can better understand the distinctions that must be made between change in the past and that which is now going on' (p.92).

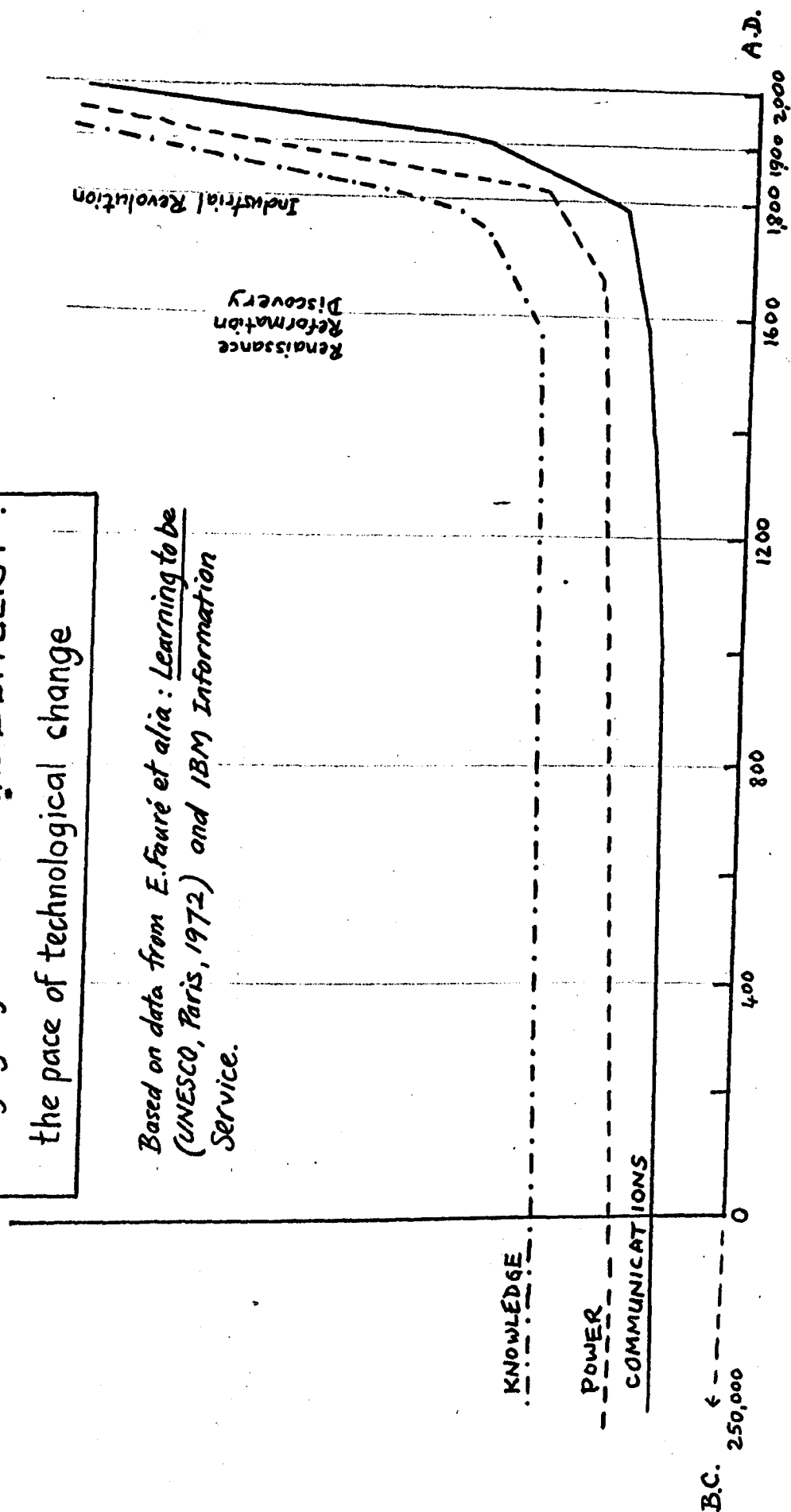
A few representative examples from the bewildering mass of evidence available may serve to illustrate the qualitative modification of our twentieth century world view - or rather, world views, for although it is more than ever true that it is only one world that we share, there remain inevitably, many views of it, reflected in the literatures and dogmatic beliefs of the various cultural groupings now being forced together by events, as we move from parochialism, through multiculturalism to globalism.

If we reflect upon the range of changes in medicine, general comfort, public welfare, recreation, architecture, education, travel, weaponry, communications, etc. which have patently occurred during the past century, it is evident that all these changes can be accounted for by developments in three primary spheres: massive acceleration in terms of power, mobility and knowledge. The significance of changes in these three areas in relation to literature and dogma, will be discussed in due course (see pp.245-8)

(Figure 1)

Changing significance of the 'ZEITGEIST': the pace of technological change

Based on data from E. Fauré et alia: Learning to be
(UNESCO, Paris, 1972) and IBM Information
Service.



Meanwhile, at the risk of oversimplification, some key factors will be noted.

A graph showing progress in the fields of power, communications and knowledge would show no significant change of rate from the year 1 A.D. until the middle of the eighteenth century, when perhaps the first doubling of knowledge was achieved. Wind, water and muscle remained the main source of power and the speed of communication by land and water continued fairly constant. But with the advent of steam power followed by electrical and nuclear energy, the graph ascends sharply, the lines of communication, power and knowledge becoming nearly vertical if projected to the year 2000. A.D. Figure 1 brings home forcibly the staggering rate of change in the pace of technological advance, and the near verticality of the lines during the past century suggests the arrival of, or at least the need for, qualitative changes in human thought and behavior in order to cope with the dynamic circumstances of modern life. It has been suggested (Dauman, 1969) that if we assume the appearance of modern man some 60,000 years ago, (a conservative estimate), then of the 800 life-spans this would give us up to the present day: 'The majority of discoveries that contribute to our material well-being (will) have been made in the lifetime of the 800th and the 801st can expect to experience more changes in his lifetime than in those of all 800 preceding him put together' (p.5).

In the same issue of the Cornhill Magazine that saw the publication of the second part of Literature and Dogma (October 1871) a columnist contributed some 'Notes on flying and flying-machines'. He wrote

There can be little question that this problem is one of great difficulty. It has, indeed, been long regarded by nearly all practical mechanics as really insoluble. But of late years careful researches have led competent men to entertain doubts as to the validity of the objections which have been urged against the theory that it is possible for men to fly. Facts have come to light which seem, to say the least, highly promising. (p.438)

That aircraft would be produced a century later travelling at twice the speed of sound could scarcely have been imagined even by this optimist. And when Arnold wrote 'Dover Beach' (published in 1867):

The sea is calm to-night,
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits...

he could scarcely have visualised his fellow-creatures scrabbling on the surface of the moon with their scientific apparatus, successful experiments in tidal power, and nuclear submarines cruising interminably beneath the surface of the sea,

The expansion of knowledge, having contributed to developments in power and communications, is also a phenomenon in its own right. The storage and retrieval of knowledge has of course been vastly improved by developments in computer technology, culminating (at least for the time being) in the miniscule silicon-chip devices. The year of the publication of Darwin's Origin of Species, 1859, had brought the invention of the slide rule which doubled the number of calculations that could be done in one minute - for example, from fifteen to thirty a minute. But on the same basis, 60 million calculations a minute can be achieved with the modern computer. The net result of these developments in terms of knowledge is that whereas knowledge was doubling every hundred years by mid-nineteenth century, the mid-twentieth century saw a doubling every fifty years, and by 1970 it was said to be doubling every five years.

All this has resulted in an almost complete reversal of our attitude to facts. In 1875 Matthew Arnold wrote that 'far more of our mistakes come from want of fresh knowledge than from want of correct reasoning' (Super VI, p.168). A century later the anxieties are very different; we are still rightly concerned to want to ascertain the facts of a situation before exercising judgment, but we are more confident of their availability and less confident of our capacity to employ them aright, even fearful of 'the tyranny of facts' overwhelming our judgment; of the trees obscuring the wood. To quote B J A Hargreaves (1970):

In a world of change it is apparent that the facility to learn is more important than a particular skill...We have to escape from the tyranny of facts - the pressure to acquire certain knowledge by specified periods in our careers. Facts change and get out of date: the ability to relearn is more important.

The 'ability to relearn' is important today not only in terms of skills but also in terms of attitudes. As the world contracts through technological acceleration, diverse and disparate cultures are drawn or forced together by unprecedented circumstances, and values enshrined in time-honoured systems of doctrine and dogma are brought into question in the light of alternative systems or of challenges from scientific development. Unquestioned truths suddenly become vulnerable, and their devotees are faced either with deeper unthinking retrenchment in their former views, or reckless abandonment of these in favour of the new ideas encountered; or with re-thinking and reinterpreting their traditional doctrines in such a way as to reconcile them with their new experience.

Scientific change and religious conservatism

Arnold believed that progress in both science and religion was subject to the inevitable influence of discovery and change, but that progress is uneven because science is not afraid to adjust its past ideas as it goes along; in fact it is bound to do so, for 'science makes her progress not merely by close reasoning and education, but also, and much more, by the close scrutiny and correction of the present commonly received data' (Super VII, p.387). But whereas

modern writers in other departments of science have now corrected their old data from top to bottom, (and) half of these data they have clean abandoned, and the other half they have transformed...theologians have not yet done so in their science of theology, and hence their unprofitableness. (ibid., p.387)

Furthermore, 'there can be no worse science than materialised poetry' (ibid. p.396); and this insecure basis of accepted theology puts it at risk in an increasingly scientific world, as well as jeopardizing lucidity of thought among those who strain to encompass both the religious and secular aspects of life in their outlook. This is the justification for Arnold's relativistic approach to religion, referred to by Bonnerot above (see p. 224) and in particular for his stress upon the poetic, and therefore suggestive, tentative and mutable, nature of scriptural language: To understand that the language of the Bible is fluid, passing and literary,

not rigid, fixed and scientific, is the first step towards a right understanding of the Bible. But to take this very first step, some experience of how men have thought and expressed themselves and some flexibility of spirit are necessary...(Super VI, p.152)

In Literature and Dogma, Arnold demonstrates how the Zeitgeist is affected by the oscillation between language and historic context; and in doing so he shows an intuitive grasp of semantics (without of course using the term, which did not come into currency until nearly a decade after his death). He shows how times and conditions create needs for words; and how words in their turn, having undergone change in their signification, may modify the intellectual climate, the Zeitgeist, of later periods. This is not the place to examine this in detail, but a few examples convey something of Arnold's approach to this phenomenon. His task in Literature and Dogma was not, he points out, to write a history of religion but to trace 'its effects on the language of the men from whom we get the Bible' (Super VI, p.182). He shows, for example, how personifying terms used by the early Jews metaphorically are used metaphysically by the later Rabbis and Christians (Super VI, p.184); and even later still malevolently in some cases as when the Athanasian Creed's damnable clauses, endowed in course of time with talismanic authority, are empowered to bring human misery in their wake. (Super VI, pp.342-343)

Again, Christ's use of the concepts of 'Fatherhood' and 'Sonship' Arnold regards as metaphorical, not scientific nor metaphysical (Super VI, p.243) until fixed to all appearances as such for centuries by theological speculation. Concrete meanings oscillate with abstract meanings over the course of history; the language of 'hope and aspiration' generated in times of trial becomes the language of expectation and prophecy (Super VI, p.222) in later periods; ethical language designed to influence conduct is abstracted for sacerdotal purposes and its moral implications largely jettisoned (Super VI, Ch.1 passim); prophetic utterances of one period are misapplied by hindsight to later occurrences, turning profound contemporary insight into spurious 'prediction'; events recorded in the language of miracle appropriate

at the time of their occurrence are passed on by the Zeitgeist to periods when such language along with the concepts it expresses, is no longer appropriate (Super VI, Ch.5), and so on. The oscillation between language and events is for good and ill as circumstances vary, but in general Arnold sees the flow optimistically: the Zeitgeist moves to clarify our understanding and increase our awareness. The words of Jesus, for example, in many cases 'imperfectly understood' among their first hearers and for a long time afterwards, 'come at last gradually to stand out clearer by time, - Time, as the Greek maxim says, the wisest of all things, for he is the unfailing discoverer' (Super VI, p.265).

Zeitgeist, renewal and eternity

One of Arnold's definitions of God has close similarity with his conception of the Zeitgeist. Seeking to find a form of words which expresses 'scientifically' and without metaphysics the concept of a creative and sustaining force he suggests that 'for science, God is simply the stream of tendency by which all things seek to fulfil the law of their being' (Super VI, p.189). The main difference between the two concepts is that God (as defined here) is the enabling process providing the pattern, the direction and the consummative energy to maintain the cosmos while the Zeitgeist is largely concerned with our understanding of the process; both, however, are evolutionary. Whereas, that is, when Thomas Aquinas said that 'everything is in a continual state of becoming' he meant, by and large, that it was continually becoming the same thing; for Arnold and most of his contemporaries it seemed clear ^{that} everything was continually becoming something else, and probably something better. As Tennyson put it:

The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils himself in many ways...
(The Idylls of the King)

For the rationalist side of Arnold, the side that needed verification as an anchorage for religious belief, the Zeitgeist was probably a useful way of dealing with the problem of 'Eternal Life' in the limitless cosmos created by science. For those eager for reassurance of personal, individual

and subjective experience after life - either in a renewed body or a disembodied soul - the Zeitgeist has little to offer. But for those who temperamentally eschew, or have reluctantly abandoned, hope of any kind of natural continuence or miraculous restoration of powers after death the Zeitgeist offers a convenient, and almost indisputable, consolation. For an increasing number of people today, including many theologians, Eternal life is seen as concurrent with, rather than following consecutively, our earthly life. In this view the 'enlightened' live their personal individual lives within eternity, sharing creatively in the inheritance from the past and the contribution of contemporaries, and leaving a positive and purposeful residue of themselves in the stream of life passed on to the future. The 'unenlightened' are those who fail to participate fully in this stream of human experience, regarding their own brief time span as the sum of their significance, and viewing the world as a kind of lucky (or unlucky) dip, or a brief sphere for personal plunder and exploitation. Enlightenment, in this perspective, is seeing the Kingdom of Heaven, not as some future estate, but within each of us, to be nourished by, and to nourish in turn, the stream of life into which we are projected. Individual life may be brief, but it is endowed with permanent significance since by being ineradicably intertwined with the larger life stream it becomes meaningful in terms of the survival of humanity. This is in its essentials the doctrine Arnold develops throughout Literature and Dogma and related religious works. Rejecting the concepts of 'a future state' and of 'the corporeal resurrection' of Christ, Arnold asserts that:

The true centre of gravity of the Christian religion is in the method and secret of Jesus, approximating, in their application, ever closer to the epie-ikeia, the sweet reasonableness and unerring sureness of Jesus himself. But as the method of Jesus led up to his secret, and his secret was dying to 'the life in this world' and living to 'the eternal life', both his method and his secret culminated in his 'perfecting' on the cross, which he himself foresaw and foretold. (Super VI, p.318)

The culmination on the cross is the guarantee of a life lived in the here and now, but contributing with consummate integrity to the eternal stream;

and the foretelling of this grim conclusion not the prescient prelude to a cosmic miracle but the expression of determination to see through a vital and dangerous mission to the predictable end. Jesus is 'no metaphysical phantom' but a man whose utter unselfishness enabled him to penetrate deeply into the corporate life of mankind; 'for to live by dying to our life in this world is to transfer the natural love of life from the personal self to the impersonal self, - the self that we share with all other men' (Super VI, p.334) and to make a profound contribution to the Zeitgeist.

In expressing such views Arnold seemed dangerously way out to his theological contemporaries, but events have tended to bear him out; the movement of the Zeitgeist has favoured his view. Discussing changes in Christian theology, for example, Paul M Van Buren writes:

Marx and Freud have played their part in defining Jesus as 'the man for others', and the development in the nineteenth century of the Western understanding of man separates a Bonhoeffer, a Barth and a Bishop Robinson from a Luther, a Calvin and a Bishop Jewel.

Arnold is certainly closer to the twentieth century theologians quoted than to the earlier trio, without benefit of Marx and Freud.

The Zeitgeist and Marxist criticism

Although Freud had scarcely made his mark during Arnold's lifetime, the influence of Marx was beginning to establish itself. There are, it appears no direct references to Karl Marx in Arnold's prose writings but a brief quotation from Marx occurs four times in Arnold's Note-Books (Lowry, 1952) between 1875 and Arnold's death in 1888: 'Society is a sort of organism on the growth of which conscious efforts can exercise little effect' (pp.228, 273, 299 and 438). The quotation is ironical considering the concern of both Marx and Arnold to influence their society. Perhaps for Arnold in his latter years it was entered as a kind of comforter; or perhaps it was a tribute to the Zeitgeist, in which case it has, like much Marxist criticism, a Hegelian ring. However, although in part, Arnold's concept of the Zeitgeist derives indirectly from Hegel's Heraclitian doctrines that reality must be

understood in terms of change and flux, Arnold had little time for system-izers (of which Hegel was a prime example) and, in his essay on Spinoza, he quotes with relish Heinrich Heine's comment on Hegel:

I have seen Hegel, he cries, seated with his doleful air of a hatching hen upon his unhappy eggs, and I have heard his dismal clucking. - How easily one can cheat oneself into thinking that one understands everything when one has learnt only how to construct dialectical formulas! (Super III, p.182)

Dialectical formulas in the Hegelian tradition, however, are the stock-in-trade of Marxist criticism and no discussion of the Zeitgeist would be complete without reference to this.

Lukács, a moderate among Marxist literary critics, is like Arnold, concerned with the Zeitgeist and with literature. The Historical Novel (1962) examines the rise of historical consciousness in literature, however; whereas (by contrast) Arnold's Literature and Dogma explores what amounts to the growth of historical unconsciousness - a kind of speculative miasma progressively befogging biblical and theological writing. Writing relatively specifically - with his eye on the object - (on Sir Walter Scott, for example), Lukács is sensitive and penetrating. Generalizing, however, his writing suffers from the Marxist literary critical compulsion of bending the data to match the theory:

The great novels of world literature, in particular those of the nineteenth century, portray not so much the collapse of a society as its process of disintegration, each one embracing a phase of this process. Not even in the most dramatic of novels is it at all necessary to allude to the social collapse as such. To fulfil the aims of the novel all that is required is to show convincingly and powerfully the irresistible course of social-historical development. (Lukács, 1962, p.144)

All that is required, apparently, is total prescience, in order to ascertain 'the irresistible course of social-historical development'.

This is a tall order which Lukács's own experience might have warned him off attempting, since in the Preface to the English edition of

The Historical Novel in 1960 Lukács had already candidly admitted that

'This book was composed during the winter of 1936/7...Certain expectations have proved too optimistic, have been belied by historical events. For example, the book pins exaggerated, indeed false, hopes on the independent liberation movement of the German people, on the Spanish revolution,

etc...' (Lukács, 1962, p.13). Whether it is assumed that long-range forecasting is easier than short-range prediction I don't know, but the assumption in either case seems hazardous.

Another Marxist writer interested in the Zeitgeist is J D Bernal, whose Science and History (1965), a masterly production full of insight and challenge, interprets the past more convincingly than it predicts the future. Leaving aside the mass of historical interpretation for which I have profound respect, I wish here only to draw attention to brief passages which, on the negative side, I found disturbing. Writing of the enormous changes being brought about by scientific development, particularly in molecular biology and computer technology, Bernal comments on the impact of these changes on philosophy:

The realization of the process of science itself and especially of its extremely rapid advance is bound to put into question the very central objectivity of philosophy - truth. First in the course of a single lifetime, then in a decade, now in a year we have found new basal facts and whole attitudes of viewing the universe are going to change. There is no evidence at all that this process is slowing down, on the contrary it is speeding up. The fact itself must be recognized and is in effect being recognized in practice by most of the scientific thinkers who have added to our knowledge. I have called it provisionalism...It is more than scepticism, it is a conviction that whatever we think now, people in a very short time from now will think differently and better. Truth thus presents a moving function; we happen to believe, for the time being, fully recognizing that it is only for the time being. The search for more knowledge goes on, but that for a stable complete knowledge must be definitely abandoned.

Most of this is unexceptionable; indeed it expresses in large part the fundamental change in conditions brought about by the Zeitgeist which it is the object of this chapter to convey, and of which Arnold had already begun to see the significance. My objection is to the confusion of 'truth' with 'belief'. 'Truth' is admittedly an abstraction, signifying what is often difficult or impossible to ascertain; but it seems to me to be important to preserve it inviolate as a concept, representing (to quote from the Concise Oxford Dictionary) what is 'in accordance with fact or reality, not false or erroneous.' For a thing to be 'true' it must be 'in accordance with reason or correct principles or received standard, rightly so called (my italics), genuine, not spurious or hybrid or counterfeit

or merely apparent (my italics)... This is different from 'belief' which, however sincere, may be 'merely apparent' and may be bound up with reason and 'principles' and a 'received standard' which are merely superficially 'correct' (i.e. in accordance with the dominant will of the group concerned). To substitute 'belief' for 'truth' is to risk moving into the realms of Orwell's Nineteen-Eighty-Four, of the refurbished 'history' of Nazi Germany, of the philosophy and theology of South African Apartheid, and of 'psychiatric treatment' for political deviationists. It is not, as Bernal suggests, truth which 'presents a moving function', but our apprehension of truth - our belief, and this is a very different thing. A second point of objection is to Bernal's amelioristic assumption that when 'people in a very short time from now will think differently' they will necessarily think 'better'. It surely depends upon what they are thinking about, on the realm of discourse or intellectual discipline they are engaged in. Will they necessarily think better than Socrates, Christ, Erasmus, Galileo, Newton, Einstein, Martin Luther King, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and in what sense 'better'? The thought of the future will presumably be as provisional as the thought of the present time; its passage in various respects may even prove to be circular or spiral. It will move according to the whims, idiosyncracies, fashions and limitations of the human mind (however much assisted by computers); but its object 'truth' moves only in accordance with quite different laws, the laws of the altering fact regardless of our capacity to perceive and interpret it.

The other disturbing passage I wish to quote from Bernal's Science in History comes from his conclusion:

Now, thanks to science, we can make that margin (of production over subsistence) as big as we like, but misery and danger will remain the lot of man until science can be freely used, and not distorted for mean and destructive ends. In all previous class struggles, one class simply took the place of another, and exploitation went on in a different form... In the transformation from capitalism through socialism to Communism, that necessity will finally vanish, production will be ample enough to remove any need for proletarians or serfs. But there will still be a need for science, now not limited to a few specialists, but part of the life of the whole people. (Bernal, 1965, p.977)

Once again I agree entirely with the earlier observations on the importance of productivity being directed equitably to meet human needs and on re-direction of scientific enterprise from its present destructive ends; but the futuristic assumptions are of an entirely different category, not enunciating principles for legitimate future guidance of policies, but asserting dogmatic predictions quite unverifiable in practice. The historical 'necessity' of communism is simply dogma, as is the assumed quality, without exploitation, of the outcome of future class struggles. Theory has taken over from sure knowledge and has warped interpretation.

In an essay with the intriguing title 'The Houyhnhnms, the Yahoos, and the History of Ideas', R S Crane (1967) makes an important observation on the use of history in this way:

There is nothing intrinsically illegitimate in the mode of historical writing that organises the intellectual happenings of different ages in terms of their controlling 'climates of opinion', dominant tendencies, or ruling oppositions of attitude or belief; and the results of such synthesizing efforts are sometimes...illuminating in a high degree. The objection is rather to the further assumption, clearly implicit in these arguments, that the unifying principles of histories of this type have something like the force of empirically established universal laws... (p.600)

Here Crane is writing about the application of the Zeitgeist concept to literary criticism, and advocating an empirical regard for recognizing the specificity of artefacts amidst the general rules we may draw up about a period; but his point is equally applicable to prediction on the basis of abstraction from the past. This is more fully developed by Karl Popper in The Open Society and Its Enemies (1966).

Karl Popper's opposition to historicism

Popper's main concern is to demonstrate the dangers of 'historicism' - the danger of regarding the Zeitgeist as an ultimate power to which mankind and his doings are totally subservient. 'History' he says 'has no meaning', in fact 'in the sense in which most people speak of it (it) simply does not exist' (p.269) since it is simply the sum of the various interpretations of the past which a diversity of men have selected from the vast range of data available, and necessarily ignored from the vaster

range of inaccessible data. Consequently, it is dangerous for men to look for 'the essence of human destiny' by contemplating history. A crucial paragraph indicates his view:

To sum up, there can be no history of 'the past as it actually did happen'; there can only be historical interpretations, and none of them final; and every generation has a right to frame its own...It also has a kind of obligation to do so - for there is indeed a pressing need to be answered. We want to know how our troubles are related to the past, and we want to see the line along which we may progress towards the solution of what we feel, and what we choose to be our main tasks. It is this need, which, if not answered by rational and fair means, produces historicist interpretations. Under its pressure the historicist substitutes for a rational question: 'What are we to choose as our most urgent problems, how did they arise, and along what roads may we proceed to solve them,' the irrational and apparently factual question: 'Which way are we going? What, in essence, is the part that history has destined us to play?'

This, Popper believes, is the route to totalitarianism; whether Christian, Communist or Fascist in origin, abandonment to the Zeitgeist is abandonment to the ruling clique prepared to bolster their power with the mystical associations of an approved Destiny for mankind. Since the history of power with which we are usually confronted was 'written not by God, but, under the supervision of generals and dictators, by the professors of history, it is pure blasphemy to take history as the self-revelation of God. 'I contend', Popper writes, 'that this view is pure idolatry and superstition, not only from the point of view of a rationalist or humanist but from the Christian point of view itself.' (p.271). In an important parenthesis he writes: 'conscience must judge power, and not the other way round' (p.273). This point is worth developing, for 'conscience' in Popper's view (as in Arnold's) is personal, as distinct from 'reason' which 'like language, can be said to be a product of social life' (p.225). Moreover 'experience' (as for Arnold, with his emphasis on verification) must be the impartial arbiter of controversies. Discussing the 'inter-subjectivity' and 'public character' of scientific method, Popper writes:

When speaking of 'experience' I have in mind experience of a 'public' character, like observations, and experiments, as opposed to experience in the sense of more 'private' aesthetic or religious experience; and an experience is 'public' if everybody who takes the trouble can repeat it. In order to avoid speaking at cross-purposes, scientists try to express their theories in such a form that they can be tested, i.e. refuted (or else corroborated) by such experience. (p.218)

However, although 'scientific objectivity' is a social product, permanently open to criticism and argument, Popper stresses that society must always be seen to be composed of 'certain concrete individuals', however numerous and anonymous these may be: 'Therefore (he writes), in speaking of a 'social' theory of reason (or of scientific method), I mean more precisely that the theory is an inter-personal one, and never that it is a collective theory' (p.226). In consequence he believes that society should be organized in such a way as to guarantee open access to knowledge, to encourage democratic and scientific criticism, and to eschew dogma and scholasticism. The amelioration of the human condition should be based not on systematic ideological social engineering, but on a piecemeal approach to problems, based on a combination of ethical and practical considerations. It will be seen that Karl Popper's approach resembles Arnold's in many respects, while at the same time, drawing attention to the dangers inherent in the Zeitgeist concept if this is regarded as a directive power in human affairs and human destiny. Where Arnold appears to slip from a figurative to a purposive use of the term his writing becomes suspect; but the concept is nevertheless valuable descriptively, and metaphorically, which I am convinced is his usual intention in employing it.

Zeitgeist and Weltanschauung

P J Keating, in an article on 'Arnold's Social and Political Thought' (Allott, 1975) admirably indicates the conjunction of the Zeitgeist and Weltanschauung concepts:

The pace and radical nature of social change in the nineteenth century has given, Arnold argues, a greater sense of urgency than ever before to the disinterested contemplation of the historical process, and need to 'find a true point of view', and the man who can discover this (and Arnold never doubted he had done so) becomes the potential prophet of nineteenth-century society. (p.214)

Here we have the accelerating 'historical process' (the Zeitgeist) demanding an interpretive 'point of view' (Weltanschauung) to take account of its contemporary significance. For Arnold, as Keating points out, 'the principal transforming force at work in Western society is the movement towards democracy' (ibid., p.215). The problem for education is to create autonomous men and women capable of shouldering the responsibilities of democracy in a fast-changing world. Ironically, the very factors which make the production of 'whole men' and 'whole women' so vital are the same conditions which militate against harmonious and complete adjustment. A

century ago, Matthew Arnold put the problem like this:

Our present age has around it a copious and complex present, and behind it a copious and complex past; it...exhibits to the individual man who contemplates it the spectacle of a vast multitude of facts awaiting and inviting his comprehension. The deliverance consists in man's comprehension of this present and past. It begins when our mind begins to enter into possession of the general ideas which are the law of this vast multitude of facts. It is perfect when we have acquired that harmonious acquiescence of mind which we feel in contemplating a grand spectacle that is intelligible to us; when we have lost that impatient irritation of mind, which we feel in presence of an immense, moving confused spectacle which, while it perpetually excites our curiosity, perpetually baffles our comprehension. (Super I, p.20)

We must have, as he puts it elsewhere, 'an idea of the world' in order to come to terms with it, and with our place in it, - a 'point of view' from which to contemplate the moving and multitudinous spectacle of the world around us. In like manner, Karl Popper (1966), a staunch advocate of the 'open society' stresses nevertheless that 'we cannot avoid a "point of view"; and the belief that we can, must lead to self-deception and lack of critical care'. And E F Schumacher (1974), writing on education (as distinct from training), believes that 'what people are really looking for is ideas that would make the world, and their own lives, intelligible to them. When a thing is intelligible you have a sense of participation - when a thing is unintelligible you have a sense of estrangement' (p.68).

This danger of estrangement is also voiced by W D Wall (1977):

The multiplicity of values in our societies, the many clashes of creed, the apparently limitless range and multiplicity of life styles, and the uncertainties of parents and teachers, make the task of finding out what to believe and to do extremely difficult. It carries with it the risk that choice may be refused in favour of an unreal conversion to dogma or postponement of thought or a sealing off of the quest in a kind of hedonistic escapism or denial. (p.60)

At the same time, in Wall's view, this openness and range of scope provides a creative challenge for those temperamentally and circumstantially able to cope with it.

Margaret Mead (1972) holds a similar view. We have arrived at a condition where 'men who are the carriers of vastly different cultural traditions are entering the present at the same point in time' (p.96) and in the resultant state of flux 'today the elders can no longer present with certainty moral imperatives to the young' (p.103).

Consequently, the young are pioneers in a new situation, with new dangers and new potentialities:

Just as man is newly faced with the responsibility for not destroying the human race and all living things and for using his accumulated knowledge to build a safe world, so at this moment the individual is freed to stand aside and question, not only his belief in God, his belief in science, or his belief in socialism, but his belief in anything at all (p.10).

Margaret Mead postulates three kinds of cultural relationships between the generations: 'postfigurative, in which children learn primarily from their forebears, cofigurative, in which both children and adults learn from their peers, and prefigurative, in which adults learn also from their children' (p.31), and she believes that we are moving fast into the third of these. It is true, she remarks, that

in many parts of the world the parental generation still lives by a post-figurative set of values. From parents in such cultures children may learn that there have been unquestioned absolutes, and this learning may carry over into later experience as an expectation that absolute values can and should be re-established. Nativistic cults, dogmatic religions, and political movements flourish most vigorously at the point of recent breakdown of postfigurative cultures, and least in those cultures in which orderly change is expected to occur within a set of stable values at higher levels of abstraction. (p.105)

This is a plea for open-ended education, since any attempt to re-establish 'postfigurative' (absolutist and dogmatic) elements will result in their being 'far more rigid and intractable than in the past because they must be defended in a world in which conflicting points of view, rather than orthodoxies, are prevalent and accessible' (p.107). In fact this is something of an over-simplification, since there are both 'conflicting points of view' and 'orthodoxies' at the disposal of the questioning mind. These viewpoints and orthodoxies, whether total ideologies, dogmatic systems or loose clusters of principles, can be called collectively Weltanschauungen.

Weltanschauung, from the German meaning approximately 'world outlook' has been defined by Anthony Quinton (see Bullock and Stallybras, 1977) as
a:

General conception of the nature of the world, particularly as containing or implying a system of value-principles. Any philosophical system may be so styled which derives practical consequences from its theoretical component. It is common for important but comparatively local scientific discoveries or conjectures to be generalised into total systems of this kind, for example, those of Newton, Darwin, Marx and Freud.

A significant feature of this definition is the reference to the 'practical consequences' of a world-view: the interpretation of the individual or group provides a guide to action. The definition needs enlarging to include theological along with philosophical systems. To quote from Albert Schweitzer (1961 (1923)), who has probably written more deeply on this issue than any other theologian-philosopher: '...the distinction between a religious world-view and a philosophical is quite superficial. The religious world-view which seeks to comprehend itself in thought becomes philosophical, as is the case among the Chinese and the Hindus. On the other hand a philosophical world-view, if it is really profound, assumes a religious character' (p.42). The translator of Schweitzer's Civilization and Ethics, from which this observation came, reminds us in a note that 'it should be borne in mind that the German word Welt has also the wider meaning of "universe"' which explains why Schweitzer 'himself defines Weltanschauung as the sum total of the thoughts which the community or the individual thinks about the nature and purpose of the universe and about the place and destiny of mankind within the world' (p.245). Because of the links between world-view, law and ethics Schweitzer observes that 'a world view is the germ of all ideas and dispositions which are determinative for the conduct of individuals and of society' (p.15). A further consideration that needs brief mention here is the connection between language and world-view. If I may quote from an article I wrote for the London Educational Review (Andrews, 1974)

Not only do human beings move in a world of words, we make our world of words, filtering our experience through the symbols with which language provides us. Words have been described...as 'bridges'...They can also be conceived of as 'cages' imprisoning our minds in assumptions and preconceptions over which our conscious minds have little control, and blinkering us against awareness of alternative interpretations of things. (p.53)

This consideration arises partly from a study of 'general semantics and partly from the concept of 'linguistic relativity' associated with Sapir (1921) and Whorf (1956). Benjamin Lee Whorf believed that we are 'very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of

expression for our own particular society, citing crucial lexical and semantic differences between different languages in evidence. However, his hypothesis that 'all observers are not led by the same physical evidence to the same picture of the universe unless their linguistic backgrounds are similar, or can in some way be calibrated' (p.214) can be pushed too far.

A modified version of this theory is expressed by Kellner (1972):

It seems (Kellner writes) that critical consideration of the results of recent research on the relation of language and cognition makes it very difficult to maintain the notions of determinism associated with Sapir and Whorf. One is then rather inclined to view that a particular language (be it the language of a culture, sub-culture, or social group) maps out the world for the individual in different degrees of intensity and typicality. In other words, language functions so as to filter and mediate cognitive processes; it does not causally determine them. Aspects of reality are not perceived in a certain way only because a certain linguistic system is superimposed upon them. Rather, language affects perception in connection with the specific problems posed for individuals or for groups by their social action. (p.79)

Weltanschauung, structuralism and collectivist criticism

Perhaps midway between Weltanschauung seen as total ideology in terms of clear-cut doctrines, and world view as mediated through the filter of language, is the concept of 'structuralism', linked with both. Eagleton (1976) is among the Marxist critics drawn to this approach. Describing the work of Lucien Goldmann, Eagleton writes that 'what Goldman is seeking... is a set of structural relations between literary text, world vision and history itself. He wants to show how the historical situation of a social group or class is transposed, by the mediation of its world-vision, into the structure of a literary work (p.33). Goldman's critical method is called 'genetic' structuralism because he is concerned to show how collective mental structures 'are historically produced - concerned, that is to say, with the relations between a world vision and the historical conditions which give rise to it.' (Eagleton, 1976, p.33) Such relations and conditions are inevitably seen in terms of class struggle, since, as Eagleton writes, 'Ideology is not in the first place a set of doctrines; it signifies the way men live out their roles in class-society, the values, ideas and images which tie them to their social functions and so prevent them from a true knowledge of society as a whole' (pp.16-17). Thus in

Marxist criticism, T S Eliot's The Waste Land is explained as 'a poem which springs from a crisis of bourgeois ideology' although it has no simple correspondence with that crisis or with the political and economic conditions which produced it' (Eagleton, 1976, p.16) However, any complete understanding of a literary work of art must, according to Eagleton, 'take into account a whole series of "levels" which "mediate" between the text itself and capitalist economy' (p.14). Sir Walter Scott's 'artistic World-view, is that of a 'sober, conservative petty aristocrat', writes Lukács (1962), redeemed by the fact that 'Scott sees the endless field of ruin, wrecked existences, wrecked or wasted heroic, human endeavor, broken social formations, etc. which were the necessary pre-conditions of the end result' (p.54).

These examples of critical observations regarding the ideology and world-view of writers are of course influenced by the Weltanschauungen of the critics, in this case critics sharing a 'collectivist' world-view of the kind objected to above (p.239) by Karl Popper. In this case, the criticisms voiced are apt and just (with the provision that the biographical element in each case would be regarded as redundant by many critics). Probably Karl Popper would not object to either observation. But collectivist criticism is not always as just, particularly if it is on the defensive, when (to quote Margaret Mead (above)) it becomes 'more rigid and intractable'. Take for example the following passage from an attack on Alexander Solzhenitsyn from Literaturnaya Gazeta (Labeledz, 1972):

Our entire people and our entire creative intelligentsia regard renegades with scorn. Only individual writers who had failed to examine closely the spiritual make-up of these renegades gave bourgeois propaganda an excuse to list them among the 'supporters' of Ginzburg, Galanskov, and their crew and appeared before public opinion in their own country as politically immature and irresponsible persons. (p.190)

Objections are made to Feast of the Victors, Cancer Ward, and The First Circle ('containing malicious slander on our social system' (p.196)). The 'correct' attitude for a writer is then outlined:

History has charged Soviet writers with the great and noble responsibility of heralding the advanced ideas of our age, the ideas of communism and of fighting for the social and spiritual values achieved by the socialist

system. This is a responsibility to history, to society, and to their own talents, which flourish only in serving great goals, in serving the people. This is the responsibility of a person who feels he is not a detached observer in today's world, or a grumbling nihilist, but a fighter for communist ideals. (p.196)

At a meeting of the Ryazan writers' organization, held on 4 November 1969, Alexander Kozhevnikov, secretary for campaigning and propaganda of the Ryazan regional committee of the CPSU, concluded a speech upbraiding Solzhenitsyn with the words: 'We must all toe the line, go forward together, in orderly ranks - all acting as one - not under some kind of lash but in accordance with our conscience' (p.216). Alexander Solzhenitsyn's conscience was the wrong shape: he was expelled, and sent into exile. In his Nobel Speech (Solzhenitsyn, 1972) he expresses his credo as a writer and as an individual:

Man is built in such a way that...his experience of life, both as an individual and as a member of a group, determines his world outlook, his motivations and his scale of values, his actions and his intentions. As the Russian saying goes, 'Trust not your brother: trust your own eye, even if it's crooked'. This is the soundest basis for understanding one's environment and for determining one's behavior within that environment. (p.10)

The century following Matthew Arnold's Literature and Dogma has witnessed a dramatic turnabout in Western culture: Christian dogmatists rounded on Arnold's rationalistic interpretations; a hundred years later Solzhenitsyn's Christian individualism is decried by rational dogmatists.

Power, mobility and dogmatic ideologies

There is by no means a uniform Weltanschauung even in Europe; but the Zeitgeist has made its mark universally by the dramatic shifts in knowledge, power and mobility referred to earlier (pp.225-229). These changes entail significant implications in relation to dogma and literature, which will now be considered in turn.

A dogmatic system depends for its survival upon the subordination of acquired knowledge to its fundamental organizational pattern. In other words, it makes little difference how much knowledge is acquired so long as the items of information are filtered through the machinery of a particular conceptual system before being categorized and compartmentalized. For

example, as Arnold points out in connection with the writers of the New Testament and their conceptual schema: their Weltanschauung, 'The men being what, and when and whence they were, the miracles would certainly grow up for them around and in the wake of Jesus' (Super VI, p.324).

The same 'filtering' principle can be observed in more detail in works such as the Critical and Expository Bible Cyclopaedia popular in the late nineteenth century. The author, Dr A R Fausset, Canon of York, deals, for example, with a problem of chronology in Genesis by stretching the normal length of a generation: '...the length of a generation varies: Abraham, at a time when life was so much longer than it is now, implies a generation was about 100 years (Gen. xv, 16, comp.13), "the fourth generation" answering to "four hundred years". The Hebrew text was preserved with.. scrupulous care...' (Fausset, c. 1895, p.129). And biblical details which would in the normal course of events imply rather an extraordinary degree of human fecundity he explains as follows:

The increase from 70, at Jacob's going down to Egypt, to 600,000 at the exodus is accountable when we remember the special fruitfulness promised by God. There were at the exodus 51 pairs at least bearing children, for there were 67 men, viz. Jacob's 12 sons, 51 grandsons, and four great grandsons, besides one daughter and one granddaughter (Gen. xlv, 8-27). These 51 must have taken foreign wives. Then, besides, polygamy, prevailed. All these causes together fully account for the great increase in 215 years. (p.129)

Similarly a recent Muslim Commentary on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Tabandeh, 1970). Faced with the concept of 'equal rights.. without distinctions of any kind such as sex...' the traditional attitude of the faith is justified in the following terms:

Islam has granted to women the fullest possible measure of freedom that is not contrary to her nature, her constitution and her chastity. There are certain things in life which are not suitable for women, and certain tasks which do not conform to her nature; and these Islam forbids her to undertake: e.g. interfere in politics...(etc.etc.). (p.51)

Thus information or concepts which might be felt to endanger the system can be dealt with in a variety of ways: by 'logical' confutation (logic, or pseudo-logic, can be used almost as successfully against the truth as for it); by appeals to higher authority; by relegation of the conflicting data to inferior status; by ridicule; by suggestion; by evasion, and

so on. Such devices are used by the dogmatist - sometimes consciously, but more often than not probably as a result of unconscious rationalisation. Information and concepts, which are supportive to the dogmatic system in question are eagerly embraced and made much of by elaboration and integration with the system. Of course, not all world-views are dogmatic; but where they are, this filtering and integrating process must inevitably take place to safeguard the system's preservation.

For the process to be successful within any closed ideology or dogmatic system, the dogmatists are dependent upon the power structure they inhabit. If the economic and political power favours the dogma in question its proponents can rely on the support not only of 'authority' per se but of concomitant social constraints in the form of reward and punishment patterns imposed by the state or community. (Both perception and 'belief' are highly adaptable to circumstances, and the human urge for survival commonly finds a ready ally in the capacity for rationalization. The penalty for failing to adapt is the painful phenomenon sometimes termed 'cognitive dissonance' which can prove either debilitating or a spur to creativity.) Power, whether it is life-enhancing through provision of food, shelter, medicine, education, etc. or life-menacing by threats of imprisonment, violence or death, etc. is therefore of crucial importance to the maintenance of a dogmatic system; and it does not matter very much (from this point of view) whether the power is exercised by despotic monarchy, theocracy, social democracy, or 'co-operative', so long as its constraints are felt, and inescapable.

This leads to the third aspect in question, mobility. Given the existence of rival alternative ^{dogmatic} systems or of 'open societies' where free enquiry is allowed or encouraged, the success of any particular dogmatic system depends to a considerable degree upon the immobility of the mass of its adherents, or the guarantee that the granting of mobility will be limited to those so thoroughly indoctrinated as to be impervious to other influences. The indoctrination may be conscious or unconscious, but the net

result is the same: deeply embedded assumptions are unlikely to be shifted by relatively casual contacts, especially among those whose permission to travel and whose status on readmission are advantageously linked with their community's power structure. The seclusion of Japan until the mid-nineteenth century protected for many centuries a system of assumptions which included elements long ago shed in Europe. The more recent isolation of Communist China enabled a series of doctrinal developments to take place without outside interference. Travel between East and West and between countries with rival ideologies in Africa continue to present problems because of the unwillingness of authorities to risk the exposure of their subjects to dangerous external influences. And so on.

I am using the concept 'mobility' here in preference to 'communication' because communication is to a large extent language-bound. (There is not much point in my tuning in to an Arabic radio station if I do not understand Arabic; and the chances of having an adequate capacity to translate and interpret Arabic material are greatly enhanced, if not totally dependent upon, the opportunity to spend time in an Arabic-speaking community.) Given differences in language, the power structure of a state can largely determine the amount of translated communication available within its confines. The term 'mobile', which I am taking to mean 'movable, not fixed, free to move; easily changing...from place to place' (Concise Oxford Dictionary), can be applied both to people and to knowledge, and the genuinely free movement of either is necessarily a threat to the continued existence of a dogmatic system. Hence the importance, for a condition of open enquiry, of mobility.

Mobility and literature

Mobility is also important to the growth and nourishment of significant literature, since the prime value of literature is to express the universal elements in human experience, albeit through the representation of particular details. On the one hand, the confined life is prevented from sufficiently wide exposure to a variety of experience to be able to

distinguish what is universal from what is individual or parochial.

On the other hand the containment of literary production within the country or culture of its origin limits the possibilities of creative cross-fertilization and of offering the chance to others in other cultures to extend their own understanding of what is universal and significant in human existence.

It is, of course, the opportunity provided by literature to extend the range of our experience even if only vicariously, that induces anxiety among dogmatists and leads often to censorship and proscription. The systemized organization of shared and authorized opinions is immediately threatened by the intrusion of alternative opinions presenting a different world-view or canvassing new or uncensored assumptions. The very existence of dogmatic adherence derives from individual anxiety; a sense of individual inadequacy to cope with the world's 'multitudinousness'; or its apparent inconsistency or paradox, leads men to lean on the authority of the group or of tradition. Literature, by presenting different points of view and by engaging the feelings of the reader in sympathy with these different viewpoints, may introduce forbidden knowledge, or knowledge in a forbidden (unfiltered) form, thus encroaching dangerously on psychological allegiance to accepted authority. It also introduces a new principle of power: there is more than a little truth in the oft repeated maxim 'the pen is mightier than the sword'* If it were not so there would be no need for the application of such charges as 'attempting to subvert the State by means of poetry' recently invoked (in 1975) against a dissident

*v. (e.g.) 'Many wearing rapiers are afraid of goose-quills' (Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, II, c.1601); 'How much more cruel the pen may be than the sword' (Robert Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy* I, 1601); 'More danger comes by th'quill than by the sword' (Martin Parker, 1641); 'Scholars are men of peace, they carry no arms, but their tongues are sharper than Actus his razors; their pens carry further and make a louder report than thunder. I had rather stand the shock of a basilisco than the fury of a merciless pen'. (Sir Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici*—II, 1642); 'Caesar had perished from the world of men/ Had not his sword been rescued by his pen.' (Henry Vaughan, *Sir Thomas Bodley's Library*, c.1650); 'The pen is mightier than the sword' (E G Bulwer-Lytton, *Richelieu* II, 1838. (Data from HJ Mencken (1966))).

Note: Perhaps this sentiment among literary men is hardly surprising!

white South African, or for the exiling or confinement of 'unacceptable' novelists in the U.S.S.R. That is why Solzhenitsyn as poet and novelist is also a symbol of the living power of literature to modify human consciousness, to disturb assumptions and subvert unquestioned beliefs.

Attempts to silence him or immobilize his writing proved unsuccessful and the experiential knowledge he was determined to communicate has thankfully resisted the power structure that sought to stifle and contain it.

On the other side of the coin, but equally significant, is the prevention of writers and journalists from entering countries of competing ideologies; as for example, the U.S. State Department's refusal to allow all but a selected few 'exceptional' Americans to travel in China in the post-war period up to the late sixties. According to Edgar Snow (1970) it was not until 1969 that

Under pressure from publishers, scientists, educators and some congressmen, the State Department cautiously increased the number of exceptions made to the administrative ruling which excluded Americans from travel in China... but by then the issue had become somewhat irrelevant. China had closed its doors to all but a handful of foreign visitors during the Great Proletarian Revolution and Americans were not in that handful. (p.29)

Power, knowledge and mobility are neutral in themselves, but in practice they soon become intertwined with values (and of course with each other).

Perhaps it is as well that the acceleration in their advance has been virtually parallel; it certainly seems important that knowledge, including particularly the personal and individual kinds of knowledge embodied in literary 'experience' should be freely available, and that people, as well as the books they read and write, should be allowed maximum mobility since open communication is likely to provide the surest checks against the solidified entrenchment of dogmatically oriented power.

The open world-view of art - a means of transcending tensions

So far we have been considering the concept of Weltanschauung largely in terms of closed ideologies or fixed dogmatic systems; but the term (as has been suggested) can also be applied to a loose cluster of principles such as might be held by a liberal thinker or an imaginative writer. Muecke (1969) discussing Romantic Irony and its appeal for a

writer in the modern 'open' world believes that

It both saw and answered the basic questions with which a modern Weltanschauung confronts the artist. It recognized, to begin with, man's ironic predicament as a finite being, terrifyingly alone in an infinite and infinitely complex and contradictory world of which he could achieve only a finite understanding, and in his art only a finite presentation, but a world for which he, and particularly the artist, the artist as God since there was no other, had nevertheless to accept responsibility and give it meaning and value. It went on to recognize that implicit even in the artist's awareness and acceptance of his limitations there lay the possibility, through the self-irony of art, of transcending his predicament, not actually, intellectually and imaginatively. (p.215)

Such an approach avoids the escapism of pure subjectivity and of false 'harmonious resolutions' in literary works; and equally avoids the destructiveness of nihilism. Theorists of Romantic Irony 'wishing to keep open the place of art in an open world...prescribed "dynamic" literature which would ironically accept and ironically express within itself the general ironies of art and of the human predicament at large and so preserve itself against "the destructive power of the whole"' (ibid.). This viewpoint and this task are not, however, entirely restricted to theorists of Romantic Irony; to a lesser extent perhaps, but equally importantly, literature in general (where it is conceived in a genuinely open, creative and imaginative way) seeks to delineate rather than evade the tensions, perplexities and paradoxes - in short, the ironies of life, and thus make them meaningful if possible and bearable whether meaningful or not.

Arnold's eudaemonism criticised

The question of life's meaningfulness or otherwise brings us to the final issue relating to Arnold and Weltanschauung. I am inclined to agree with those critics who see in Arnold's optimistic naturalism and his eudaemonism a flaw in his world-view. For example, in writing about what he saw as the high point of the Hebrews' perception of the Eternal, or God, in Literature and Dogma, he asserts:

God or Eternal is here really, at bottom, nothing but a deeply moved way of saying 'the power that makes for conduct or righteousness.' 'Trust in God', is, in a deeply moved way of expression, the trust in the law of conduct; 'delight in the Eternal' is, in a deeply moved way of expressing the happiness we all feel to spring from conduct. Attending to conduct to judgment, makes the attender feel that it is the commandment of the Eternal, and that the joy got from it is joy got from fulfilling the commandment of the Eternal. (Super VI, p.193)

Without wishing to deny that there is an element of truth in this, it seems perhaps from the distance of the last quarter of the twentieth century a little too neat, too glib. It is certainly some way from the feeling expressed in Arnold's poem 'Morality' (Allott, 1965) two decades earlier:

We cannot kindle when we will
The fire which in the heart resides;
The spirit bloweth and is still
In mystery our soul abides.
But tasks in hours of insight willed
Can be through hours of gloom fulfilled... (p.259)

- a statement which is at least equally true. There is an intriguing ambiguity in the definition of God as 'the power that makes for conduct or righteousness'. Does it mean the power that will ensure that righteousness ultimately prevails; or does it mean the power that facilitates such righteousness as is achieved in the world? It seems to me that Arnold's poetry adopts in general the second, more stoical viewpoint; his prose (closer to the first viewpoint) savours at times of the general current of Victorian optimism.

Life views and world-views distinguished

In Civilization and Ethics, written half a century later than Arnold's Literature and Dogma, Albert Schweitzer (1961 (1923)) faces up to the same issue, resolving it by a unified combination of the two separated elements we find in Arnold. Schweitzer's main contention is that our 'life-view' is independent of our world-view. Our 'life view' is our will-to-live and our recognition of the 'will-to-live' in others, our sensitivity resulting from this, and our conception of the cosmic scene where we play out our relatively infinitesimal lives. 'We are entirely ignorant of what significance we have for the earth,' he writes. 'How much less then may we presume to try to attribute to the infinite universe a meaning which has us for its object, or which can be explained in terms of our existence.' (p.182). Nature 'is a wonderfully creative force, and at the same time a senselessly destructive force. We face her absolutely perplexed' (ibid.). However:

The life-view held by European thought being optimistic-ethical, the same character was attributed to world-view in defiance of facts. Wishful

thinking, without admitting it, overpowered knowledge. Life-view prompted and world-view recited. So the belief that life-view was derived from world-view was only a fiction. (p.183)

Here Schweitzer, reacting like Kierkegaard against the Hegelian Absolute, (the all-embracing Zeitgeist sweeping men forward in its divine purpose), puts the responsibility for ethical consciousness and behavior fairly and squarely upon mankind, and adopts what is essentially an existentialist position. Schweitzer concedes that 'the greatness of European philosophy consists in its having chosen the optimistic-ethical world-view' but asserts that 'its weakness (was) its having again and again imagined that it was putting that conception on a firm foundation' (p.180). I think this points to ^a weakness in Arnold too.

Schweitzer's characterization of the Rationalist world-view, which his own existentialist position discards, is very much akin to Arnold's:

Its optimism consists in that it assumes as ruling in the world a general purpose directed to the achievement of perfection, and that from this purposiveness the efforts of individual men and of mankind in general to secure material and spiritual progress derive meaning and importance, and in addition a guarantee of success. (p.23)

Such a view, to the Victorians, newly awakened to the principles of evolution and witnesses of unparalleled material advance, is understandable; but for twentieth-century man it is less tenable. Schweitzer's ethic of reverence for life is based on the generalization of our individual 'will-to-live' not on cosmic purpose, therefore, and on the basic principle that 'it is good to maintain and to encourage life; it is bad to destroy life or to obstruct it':

As a matter of fact (he writes), everything which in the ordinary ethical valuation of the relations of men to each other ranks as good can be brought under the description of material and spiritual maintainance or promotion of human life, and of effort to bring it to its highest value. Conversely, everything which ranks as bad in human relations is in the last analysis material or spiritual destruction or obstruction of human life, and negligence in the endeavour to bring it to its highest value. Separate individual categories of good and evil which lie far apart and have apparently no connection at all with one another fit together like the pieces of a jig-saw puzzle, as soon as they are comprehended and deepened in this the most universal definition of good and evil (p.214)

Like Arnold, Schweitzer eschewed metaphysics ('fantastic systems', as he called them); like Arnold he sought to combine theological and philosophical

conceptions from the East with those current in the West; like Arnold he saw ethics (or 'conduct') as the central issue in religion; like Arnold he declined to define God in any but the most tentative terms. However, Schweitzer succeeded in bringing together two elements which in Arnold's development had been separated, resolving the pessimism of Arnold the poet and the optimism of Arnold the prosewriter in a convincing liberal-humanist Weltanschauung suited to meet the exacting demands of our fast-changing pluralist twentieth century society. At the same time, Arnold's world-view had an inherently modern ring imbued as it was with a consciousness of the changing significance of the Zeitgeist, prefiguring that more recently expounded by Margaret Mead, W D Wall and other twentieth century writers.

Summary of implications

The implications for education of the Zeitgeist, as discussed in this chapter, are of several kinds. Firstly the qualitative change in our time-scale, resulting from constant technological acceleration, demands a curriculum geared towards flexibility and adaptability of skills and outlook among our school students. Over-specialization could restrict the scope of pupils whose future needs cannot any longer be predicted. Emotional security is needed to cope with change; but fixed ideas and values embedded in tightly structured dogmatic systems are likely to result in excessive strife and anxiety from culture-clash in a shrinking world. Although a 'point of view' is needed to contend with the complexities of modern life, individuals will need to acquire this within a context of 'open' discussion if democratic values are to be upheld amidst the seductive security of the all-inclusive totalitarian Weltanschauungen also currently on offer. Religious education needs to be presented in an 'open' way if it is to meet the needs of multiculturalism and avoid the pitfalls of tying its more spiritual truths and insights to 'facts' or dogmas vulnerable to shifts in the Zeitgeist. And finally, literature can provide a means of overcoming to some extent the limits of our mobility and of transcending emotionally some of the tensions in the constant, although not altogether unhealthy, clash

of diverse points of view which must be a feature of a truly open society.

P A R T F O U R

LITERATURE VERSUS DOGMA

CHAPTER TEN

MATTHEW ARNOLD: EDUCATIONAL PRODUCT AND PROPONENT

We may say, then, that Arnold inherited from his father his religion - his certainty that its essential truths were unassailable, however much creeds and dogmas might be shaken. He also inherited from him his 'liberalism', taking that word to mean all that Newman most passionately opposed; above all, readiness to trim one's sails to meet new winds of doctrine.

Basil Willey, Arnold and Religion, 1975

Resolve to be thyself: and know that he
Who finds himself, loses his misery...

Matthew Arnold: 'Self-Dependence', c.1850

In this chapter Matthew Arnold will be considered, for reasons which I hope will become clear, first as the product of a particular kind of education, and second as a proponent of certain educational aims. It will not attempt a complete epistemological study of Arnold, but concentrate on those aspects of his work which have bearing on a 'literary' or 'dogmatic' - an 'imaginatively open' or a 'resolutely closed' - approach to education. It will consider the educational implications of Arnold's own character, and the formative influences upon its development, before turning to an examination of his epistemological preoccupations and his central concern with 'conduct' as the major constituent of life, and thus a chief concern of education in general, and of literature and religious education in particular.

Arnold's essential modernity and flexibility of spirit seem to stem, as one might expect, from the particular circumstances of his upbringing. His confident, questioning approach to life and its problems has a relevance to today's educational demands that makes it worthwhile considering some of the factors contributing to his early development.

The brief examination of background factors in Arnold's early life and upbringing which follows will concentrate on those elements which have a particular relevance to present-day needs, notably the factors regarded as of primary importance by a number of modern educators including W D Wall (1959), John Wilson (1967) and the anthropologist,

Margaret Mead (1972) - the need for emotional security coupled with flexible adaptability. This joint requirement is best summed up perhaps by coupling John Wilson's observation in An Introduction to Moral Education (1967) that children 'should eventually be able not just to think for themselves and entertain doubts, but to feel secure enough to do these things without severe anxiety or unhappiness' (p.162) with W D Wall's recognition of the need for men and women who 'whilst basically secure and immune from overwhelming and neurotic anxiety...are able to take calculated risks, willing to seek for, accept and digest change - (and) who are, in a word, dynamically adaptable and grow with the time' (1959, p.34)

Arnold's home background

It is true, if we examine Arnold for these qualities, that we find him having to cope by means of his poetry with a measure of anxiety and unhappiness, but that this was severe in any crippling or debilitating sense is repudiated by the record of his life and relations with his family, friends and associates and by his confident challenging of established orthodoxies. Similarly, the image of Matthew Arnold being overshadowed and dominated by his father, Dr Thomas Arnold of Rugby, is scarcely tenable. This myth is propagated ^{even} by Trilling (1955), for example, when he sees in Arnold's poem 'Sohrab and Rustum' 'at least a shadowy personal significance. The strong son is slain by the mightier father...' (pp.134-135); and W H Auden's poem 'Matthew Arnold' makes Arnold declare:

I am my father's forum and he shall be heard
Nothing shall contradict his holy final word
Nothing...

so that the poet must 'thrust his gift in prison till it died' leaving him with 'nothing but a jailor's voice and face...'. Such interpretations, while psychologically intriguing, ignore the independent stature achieved by Matthew Arnold and the channelling of his creative and imaginative energies into his witty and provocative prose writings, Friendship's

Garland (1871), Culture and Anarchy (1869), Literature and Dogma (1873), etc. They also seem to confuse filial respect and affection (which appears to have been well earned by the father) with a kind of filial self-abasement and psychological suicide on Arnold's part for which there seems to be no objective evidence. The fact is that Arnold got on remarkably well with his parents, and his home life seems to have provided the two requisite features of a modern education: a high degree of security and love, and an open, questioning intellectual environment.

From the distance of the late twentieth century Thomas Arnold may appear to be a conservative and reactionary figure; to his contemporaries he was far from this. As a historian he welcomed the New Criticism in theology emanating from Germany and pioneered the new interpretations among English theologians. Neiman (1968) describes him as 'a reformer in a reforming age' who 'tried to awaken his students to awareness of social injustices in the world outside the school' (p.19); who tried (in his own words), for example, 'to get up a real Poor Man's Magazine, which should not bolster up abuses and veil iniquities, nor prose to the poor as to children; but should address them in the style of Cobbett, plainly, boldly, and in sincerity, excusing nothing, concealing nothing, and misrepresenting nothing, but speaking the very whole truth in love' (ibid. p.19). His biographer, Stanley (1893, p.255), writes of 'the vehemence of the outcry by which he was assailed' during the 1830's for his support of the liberal views of Hampden and the Oriel Noetics.

Thomas Arnold's views on the role of an educationalist seem to have been equally advanced. Stanley quotes from a letter he wrote to a friend enquiring about tutoring. In reply Arnold draws upon his own experience at Laleham (where Matthew's early years were spent):

I should say, have your pupils a good deal with you, and be as familiar with them as you possibly can. I did this continually more and more before I left Laleham, going to bathe with them, leaping and all other gymnastic exercises within my capacity, and sometimes sailing or rowing with them. They I believe always liked it, and I enjoyed it myself like a boy, and found myself constantly the better for it. (p.20)

An ex-pupil, a Mr Price, is quoted by Stanley (op cit) in confirmation of the atmosphere prevailing at Laleham:

The most remarkable thing which struck me at once on joining the Laleham circle was, the wonderful healthiness of tone and feeling which prevailed in it. Everything about me I immediately found to be most real; it was a place where a new-comer at once felt that a great and earnest work was going forward...an indescribable zest was communicated to a young man's feeling about life; a strange joy came over him on discovering that he had the means of being useful, and thus of being happy; and a deep respect and ardent attachment sprang up towards him who had taught him thus to value life and his own self, and his work and mission in this world. Who that ever had the happiness of being at Laleham, does not remember the lightness and joyousness of heart, with which he (Dr Arnold) would romp and play in the garden, or plunge with a boy's delight into the Thames...(pp.22-23)

Thomas Arnold believed that the usefulness of a boy's education depended upon the activity induced in his mind - 'whether he has learned to think, or to act, and to gain knowledge by himself, or whether he has merely followed passively as long as there was some one to draw him' (Stanley, 1893, p.21):

As a general rule, he never gave information, except as a kind of reward for an answer, and often withheld it altogether, or checked himself in the very act of uttering it...and his questions were of a kind to call the attention of the boys to the real point of every subject and to disclose to them the exact boundaries of what they knew or did not know. (ibid. p.80)

His unorthodox, yet kindly approach is evidenced in a letter from the young Arthur Stanley (later the Dean, his biographer) to his mother. Stanley writes from Rugby: 'Oh! how particular he is; but at the same time so mild and pleasant. I liked saying to him very much. He asks very much about history, and asks queer out-or-the-way questions. He seems very much pleased when I answer anything'(Prothero, 1909,p.32). Meriol Trevor (1973) writes of a memorandum Thomas Arnold had prepared for his brother-in-law Trevenen 'about the upbringing of his children in the event of his death'. As well as showing a broad-minded attitude to denominational teaching it shows concern to avoid over-strictness, which tended to lead children into hypocrisy "and then to desperate outbreak"(p.31).

Meriol Trevor (op cit) writes of the atmosphere of the Arnold's family life:

They were a happy family, acting plays and reciting poems from their earliest years, and Mary (Thomas's wife) was an intelligent clear-minded young woman, more calm and stable than Arnold. He could not have chosen better, for Mary shared his interests and ideals without being so easily

carried away by enthusiasm. (p.19)

Matthew Arnold's letters to his mother bear witness to the love and stability thus created. Many years after his days at Laleham and Rugby he writes to her on her birthday, for example: 'Accept every loving and grateful wish from a son to whom you have for thirty years been such a mother as few sons have. The more I see of the world the more I feel thankful for the bringing up we had, so unworldly, so sound, so pure' (Chambers, 1947, p.125). He often mentions his father in his correspondence with his mother. Twenty-five years after Thomas had died, when Matthew Arnold is just forty-five years old he writes to his mother on Christmas day:

I have been reading this year in connexion with the New Testament a good deal of Aristotle and Plato, and this has brought papa very much to my mind again. Bunsen used to say that our great business was to get rid of all that was purely Semitic in Christianity, and to make it Indo-Germanic, and Schleiermacher that in the Christianity of us Western nations there was really much more of Plato and Socrates than of Joshua and David; and, on the whole, papa worked in the direction of these ideas of Bunsen and Schleiermacher, and was perhaps the only powerful Englishman of his day who did so. In fact, he was the only deeply religious man who had the necessary culture for it. Perhaps the change of times and modes of action being allowed for, my scope is not so different from his as you and I often think. (Super VI, p.456)

Here (in the last sentence) we see a hint of Arnold's independence of his father as well as of his overall respect and admiration for him.

This independence Matthew had caught from his father: it is in the spirit of Thomas's ecclesiastical liberalism 'that is said to have cost him a bishopric' (Neiman, 1968, p.20). If Matthew Arnold's testimonial in his poem 'Rugby Chapel' is to be believed, such setbacks made little difference to his father's outward demeanor:

If, in the paths of the world
Stones might have wounded thy feet
Toil or dejection have tried
Thy spirit, of that we saw
Nothing - to us thou wast still
Cheerful, and helpful, and firm!...
(Allott, 1965, p.456)

More telling as a testimonial to his father, perhaps, because unconscious, are the words Matthew uses in Literature and Dogma to justify the use of

the word 'Father' for the concept 'God':

And it is the same with all the language our Hebrew religionist uses (he writes). God is a father, because the power in and around us, which makes for righteousness, is indeed best described by the name of this authoritative but yet tender and protective relation. (Super VI, p.185)

The more we look into the record, especially between the lines, the more it becomes evident that Matthew Arnold both respected his father's stature and cherished a lively affection for him as a person. He certainly does not appear to have been overawed or crushed by him. Swinburne, apparently, 'once quoted a witty critic who referred to Matthew Arnold as "David, the son of Goliath"' (Neiman, 1968, p.14). Without pressing the comparison too far, it is worthwhile remembering which of these two protagonists came off best! Matthew's ultimate achievement might not have been easy to predict from early evidence, however. Meriol Trevor writes of Arnold's early childhood that:

he was always a great one for doing as he pleased, puzzling his good serious mother by his carelessness, his tricks and whims. Matt...was quick and imaginative but lazy in the way creative people sometimes are lazy, unable to work until their interest is wholly engaged. (p.21)

Even at Oxford his obtaining only a second class degree scarcely prefigured the honorary degree of D.C.L. that the same University was later to grant him unsought.

Creativity, independence and self-concept

At this point it is interesting to consider Arnold's character profile in the light of two modern studies of personality traits. He matches remarkably well with 'the creative members' of D W MacKinnon's experimental samples, as described by Liam Hudson (1967):

The creative members of MacKinnon's samples differ from the non-creative by being more emotionally 'open'; less hidebound in attitude and belief; and exceptionally self-reliant. In other words, they seem to differ not in their intellectual equipment, but in the use that they see fit to make of it. In this respect, MacKinnon's results agree precisely with my own, and the interpretation is supported by his finding that the creative members of his sample were frequently undistinguished at school and university. Usually, their average grade was a 'B', or less: In work and courses which caught their interest they could turn in an A performance, but in courses that failed to strike their imagination, they were quite willing to do no work at all. In general, their attitude in college appears to have been one of profound skepticism. (Hudson, pp.144-5)

That Arnold was already at Oxford a sceptical and 'divergent thinker' (to use Liam Hudson's term) was evident from a letter written in 1888 by a former Balliol scholar Edward Walford, to The Times, and quoted in Lowry (1932):

...I well remember how, when we waited in the Vice-Chancellor's ante-room for admission, Arnold professed to us his great aversion to sundry statements in the Thirty-nine Articles, which at that time we were all forced to subscribe, especially that article which expresses an approval of the Athanasian Creed, and that which denounces and renounces the Pope of Rome. In his early days,...I shall never forget how, in opposition to the Tractarianism of the day, he used to say that the strict imposition of creeds had done more to break up than to unite churches, and nations, and families, and how even then, in our small and highly privileged circle, he was the apostle of religious toleration in every direction. (pp.23-24)

An interesting study by O J Harvey on 'Conceptual Systems and Attitude Change' (Warr, 1970) which links personality constructs with parental upbringing indirectly throws considerable light on Arnold's own case. Harvey describes four basic conceptual systems to which subjects have been found to conform to a significant degree in terms of 'their personal ordering of significance' of the norms and values of their society. Harvey, to my mind rather misleadingly, describes these four theoretical systems as representing different levels of 'concreteness-abstractness' (p.318), where they seem to me to move rather from 'rigid parental conditioning' to 'open mutuality and reflexion'; but Harvey's designation at least has the merit of brevity.

Self-system One results when 'the individual has been restricted in the exploration of that part of his world concerned with values, power relations and social causality' (ibid.). Such an individual has been molded to conform 'catechismically to the omnipotently and omnisciently imposed standards of the parent or controlling authority'. As in the S-R model of psychology, values are internalised 'without insight and the ritualistic adherence to rules without understanding' is fostered:

System 1 functioning consequently manifests itself in such characteristics as high superstition, high religiosity, high absolutism and closedness of beliefs, high evaluativeness, high positive ties with and dependence on representatives of institutional authority...such as God and religion.. high identification with social roles and status positions, high conventionality and high ethnocentrism, etc. (p.318)

Self-system Two is associated with equally 'omnipotent' and 'omniscient' parental behavior, but capricious (rather than rigid) 'control of rewards and punishments' administered by authority. Such an unpredictable and unstructured world creates 'uncertainties, distrust of authority and rebellion' so that:

System 2 representatives, more than persons of any of the other self-systems, seem to be in a psychological vacuum, guided more by rejection of social prescriptions and avoidance of dependency on God and other representations of institutional authority...than by positive adherence to personally derived standards. (p.319)

Self system-Three results from 'overindulgence by one or both parents, which, by preventing exploration of the physical world and by encouraging manipulation of the parents produces...inflated notions of esteem and social power alongside the feeling of inability to cope with problems except by the control of others through dependency' (p.319). Therefore:

System 3 representatives...are concerned with establishing friendships, intra-group consensus and dependence relations in order to avert the feeling of helplessness and social isolation that would result from being forced to be on their own. Through the use of highly developed skills of manipulation, particularly through exploitation of dependencies, System 3 functioning tends to favor success in effecting desired outcomes in the social sphere. (pp.320-321)

Because of what seems to me to be its close applicability to Matthew Arnold's case, I will quote Harvey's description of System 4 in full:

System 4. The most abstract of the four systems, this mode of construal and behaving is viewed as the consequences of childhood freedom to explore both the social and physical aspects of one's own experience and thought and to solve problems and evolve solutions without fear of punishment for deviating from established truth and the social imperatives. This developmental history eventuates in a high task orientation, information seeking, exploratory behavior, risk taking and independence. (p.320)

It avoids authoritarian deference and acquiescence as in system one; it is free from the negative social rebelliousness of system two; and is independent of excessive peer group dependence to which system three tends. In Harvey's words 'System 4 is the most abstract, more impersonal and more oriented toward information seeking and problem solving for intrinsic rather than extrinsic rewards' (p.320). Significantly, the test scores of System 4 persons 'fall in the cell of low authoritarianism - low dogmatism' (p.321). Taking the evidence from Arnold's life and

writing in conjunction with Harvey's account of work on personality constructs, there seems to be much to commend the view that his preference for literature over dogma - for openness as against fixed and rigid rules - was no accident, but an inevitable result of his upbringing. If the views of W D Wall, Margaret Mead and John Wilson as to the kind of personality needed to face the demands of twentieth century living are accepted, then the quality of Matthew Arnold's particular upbringing has important educational and curricular implications.

Arnold's religious and moral background was relatively secure (in terms of love and acceptance) while at the same time relatively 'open' (questioning, advanced and unorthodox). As a result the inevitable tensions of growth and adjustment to the wider material and spiritual universe were worked out relatively early in his life through his poetry. He was thus able to achieve an equilibrium, a mental poise, and a high degree of 'disinterestedness' (one of his favourite terms) to tackle philosophical and theological problems as he saw them. Unperturbed by the competitive material and sectarian confusion around him, with no 'axe to grind' he endeavoured to 'see life clearly and to see it whole'; and with material and spiritual anxieties reduced to a minimum his outlook could remain generally optimistic, generous, 'progressive' and tolerant.

In a paper on 'Humanism and Christianity: The Common Ground of Moral Education' Hemming and Marratt (1969) discuss the significance of early education for the development of emotional security combined with intellectual flexibility. In their view the primary school has an important part to play in establishing the right basis for growth:

There has been a tendency (they write) to regard the need of the junior child for security as involving the exclusion of areas of conflict from the primary classroom. Although there is some justification for this attitude, we think that the security of the younger child should be based on secure relationships rather than on an attempt to exclude differences of view. If this is so, then there will be no harm in the study, "at a distance", or situationally, of problems of moral conduct as soon as they are relevant. (p.26)

It seems to me that Matthew Arnold's upbringing tends to fit this pattern, and that his subsequent confident flexibility tends to confirm the desirability of the practice recommended.

Arnold's doctrine of inwardness and self-knowledge

Matthew Arnold's sense of personal security derives, it has been suggested not from subservience to group authority and the comforts of institutionalised dogma but from the inwardness of self-knowledge and self-respect nurtured by domestic affection and reciprocity. Consequently it is not surprising that Arnold continues to preach inwardness and self-knowledge as a main theme of Literature and Dogma and in related writings. Already in Culture and Anarchy he declares that 'the culture we recommend is, above all, an inward operation' (Super V, p.234) designed to challenge the mischief of mechanical allegiance to 'stock notions'. 'Religion says (he writes): The kingdom of God is within you; and culture, in like manner, places human perfection in an internal condition...' (ibid, p.94). However, he is careful to distinguish between inwardness and personal isolation:

Perfection, as culture conceives it, is not possible while the individual remains isolated. The individual is required, under pain of being stunted and enfeebled in his own development if he disobeys, to carry others along with him in his march towards perfection, to be continually doing all he can to enlarge and increase the volume of the human stream sweeping thitherward. (ibid, p.94)

In other words, while the cultured individual must resist being led by the crowd, he must serve the interests of the majority by expanding the general scope of society for individuals to share the freedom to develop their own inwardness. He is against the kind of individualism expressed in competitiveness, on the basis of the maxim 'every man for himself', with each individual following his own pursuits regardless of the well-being of others, since:

the idea of perfection as a general expansion of the human family is at variance with our strong individualism, our hatred of all limits to the unrestrained swing of the individual's personality...and...the idea of perfection as a harmonious expansion of human nature is at variance with our inaptitude for seeing more than one side of a thing, with our intense absorption in the particular pursuit we happen to be following. (ibid, p.95)

In Literature and Dogma, Arnold speaks of Jesus's role as having come 'to restore the intuition' (Super VI, p.284). The idea of righteousness which had become for Israel the province of mechanical obedience to strict rules needed to be restored to the realm of emotion and to its association with happiness; and to do this Jesus provided what Arnold describes as his 'method of repentance' and his 'secret of peace' (Super VI, p.286). He showed that 'The things that come from within a man's heart, they it is which defile him (Matthew, XV, 18)' (Super VI, p.287); and demonstrated this principle in symbolic parables and acts of which the story of the Woman Taken in Adultery provides a fitting example of the complex relationship between inwardness, conscience, guilt and punishment (Super VI, pp.290-291). By encouraging his hearers 'to take each rule or fact of conduct by its inward side, its effect on the heart and character' - rather than simply as a 'mere matter of blind rule' - they were helped to make 'a return upon themselves' (Super VI, pp.218-219), and to recognize that 'conduct' (at least in its roots) is 'an inward operation'. For Israel, in Arnold's view, this 'was the introduction, in morals and religion, of the famous know thyself of the Greeks' (Super VI, p.289).

Self-knowledge, through culture, had been an important theme of Culture and Anarchy, and a poem 'Self-Dependence', probably written about 1850, concludes with the lines:

Resolve to be thyself; and know that he,
Who finds himself, loses his misery!

(Allott, 1975, p.144)

In Schools and Universities on the Continent Arnold writes of the aims of education, declaring that, 'its prime direct aim is to enable man to know himself and the world' (Super IV, p.290); and adding that, 'such knowledge is the only sure basis for action...To know himself, a man must know the capabilities and performances of the human spirit; and the value of the humanities' (referring here to classical literature, particularly of Greece). W F Connell (1950) reminds us that this report

'was produced at a critical period in the development of the curriculum. The controversy between the advocates of science and the old guard of the classics was at its height' (p.170). Consequently Arnold was defending literature (as then taught) against the incursions of science which threatened to oust it from the curriculum: 'literature' (whether classical or otherwise) was to promote self-knowledge; 'science' to nurture knowledge of the world of nature. Thus a balanced curriculum was his aim.

Returning to Literature and Dogma, the means and aims of self-knowledge are further explored in Christian terms: 'Self-examination, self-renouncement, and mildness, were,...the great means by which Jesus Christ renewed righteousness and religion...While the Old Testament says: Attend to conduct! the New Testament says: Attend to the feelings and dispositions whence conduct proceeds!' (Super VI, p.221). Emotion is thus linked with morality, by searching for its essence, by 'staying our thoughts upon it':

raising oneself out of the flux of things,...steady oneself, concentrating oneself, making order in the chaos of one's impressions, by attending to one impression rather than another...(Super VI, p.179)

- by this means the self is freed from the tyranny of the world's multitudinousness. Arnold also expresses 'the notion of a whole self as opposed to a partial self, a best self to an inferior self, to a momentary self requiring the restraint of impulses a man would naturally have indulged...' (ibid, p.179). And this recognition of potentially conflicting selves brings with it, for Arnold, the need for the Christian doctrine of episkeia, self-renouncement, Jesus's 'secret' as Arnold put it (see above) of 'peace'. Renunciation is not perhaps a very popular concept in the West today. A tempting abundance of goods and experiences combined with a widespread conviction that there 'is nothing to hope for beyond this world (and that even the duration of that may be numbered) tends to encourage us to create and snatch opportunities while we can. Our youths are therefore more likely to seek escape in hedonism where the

rewards are immediate than to dally with renunciation where the rewards appear to be more uncertain. Be that as it may, the importance of the Self-concept has certainly come to the fore in the twentieth century as a vital factor in effective education. Another factor in relation to which Arnold was something of a pioneer, yet which we now take for granted, is the recognition of an unconscious mind as a powerful dynamic element of human life. This, of course, is again related to his concern for inwardness.

In a poem 'The Buried Life', written about 1850, Arnold writes of 'Our hidden self' which is a more significant aspect of our human striving than the things on the surface that 'we try in vain to speak and act'. Typically he uses the metaphor of flowing water to communicate the concept, calling it,

The unregarded river of our life...
The buried stream,...
Eddying at large in blind uncertainty,
Though driving on with it eternally.

(Allott, 1975, p.273)

At times, amidst the din and striving of our life, 'There rises an unspeakable desire/After the knowledge of our buried life'; but its mystery lies too deep. Very occasionally, in moments of profound emotion and self-knowledge, however,

A man becomes aware of his life's flow,
And hears its winding murmur; and he sees
The meadows where it glides, the sun, the breeze...

(ibid. p.175)

(i.e. It rises into his ordinary consciousness.) A somewhat similar notion is expressed in Arnold's essay St Paul and Protestantism to explain a disparity between Paul's intellectual utterances and what Arnold believed were the spiritual and mystical pressures ultimately responsible for them. The fragment runs:-

Below the surface-stream, shallow and light,
Of what we say we feel - below the stream,
As light, of what we think we feel - there flows
With noiseless current strong, obscure and deep,
The central stream of what we feel indeed...

(Super VI, p.51)

With Freud and Jung between Arnold and ourselves there may seem nothing remarkable in these lines; but they express a concept (albeit poetically) which, scientifically presented decades after Arnold's words, have shaken our conception of the human mind from top to bottom. It is true that Carl Gustav Carus 'anticipated many of the conclusions of...Jung, though without the latter's accumulation of empirical data to support them' (White, 1960, p.53) in his book Psyche published in 1848, but there is no evidence that Arnold read this. It seems more likely that he arrived at his conception intuitively, partly through his interest in myth, partly as a result of his concern for inwardness, and partly due to his recognition of the power of the imagination and of suggestion (see below, pp.279-285)

That Arnold's concern with inwardness links powerfully with his advocacy of literature as against dogma finds strong support in some words of Lukács (1971), where he is discussing the novel:

The novel tells of the adventure of interiority; the content of the novel is the story of the soul that goes to find itself, that seeks adventures in order to be proved and tested by them, and, by proving itself, to find its own essence. (p.89)

It is concerned, in short, with the search for self-knowledge, and may thus assist symbolically in the reader's own quest for self-understanding and adjustment to the world, for promoting the impulse which Arnold sees as the guiding principle of Hellenism 'to the development of the whole man, to connecting and harmonising all parts of him, perfecting all, leaving none to take their chance' (Culture and Anarchy, Super V, p.184). A succinct and potent expression of a conception dear to Arnold occurs in Samuel Butler's novel The Way of All Flesh where the author writes that: 'A life will be successful or not according as the power of accommodation is equal to or unequal to the strain of fusing and adjusting internal and external changes' (p.309). In other words, our inwardness must facilitate, and not obstruct, our keeping step with the Zeitgeist.

System and system-makers

For the individual to cope adequately with life Arnold believes that

he 'must begin with an Idea of the World in order not to be prevailed over by the world's multitudinousness' (Lowry, 1932, p.97). How do we arrive at such an 'Idea of the World'? Not, according to Arnold, by imposing a system upon it. He quotes, with impish delight in a letter to the Editor of the Pall Mall Gazette from 'a squib, brilliant indeed, but unjustifiably severe' by 'the celebrated young Comtist', Mr Frederic Harrison, who had declared: 'We seek vainly in Mr A. a system of philosophy with principles coherent, interdependent, subordinate, and derivative' (Super V, p.76), regarding this as a compliment rather than as a criticism. In Culture and Anarchy he levels at the disciples of Comte for what he describes as their Jacobinism, their addiction to 'abstract systems of renovation applied wholesale' involving a 'new doctrine drawn up in black and white for elaborating down to the very *smallest* details a rational society for the future' (Super V, p.107). Similarly with the Utilitarians, if 'Bentham (is) cried loudly up as the renovator of modern society' (p.111) Arnold believes that the representatives of Culture should resist this along with his systematising tendencies. Culture should be selective: if Jacobinism seeks 'to impose on us a man with limitations and errors of his own along with the true ideas of which he is the organ' (p.111) there is no reason why we should accept the whole system. Arnold quotes August Comte's belief that 'the systematization of ideas' is conducive to 'the systematization of sentiments' (Super V, p.506) with distaste, recognizing its seductive appeal to the English taste for dogmatic adherence. He fears its effect on his countrymen,

with their fatal weakness for machinery, their bent for attaching themselves to this, and losing all sense, while they so attach themselves, of the spirit and truth of things, everything excessive in the way of machinery, all that gives them a chance of forgetting the principal in the accessory, the end in the means, is particularly dangerous. (Super V, p.506)

His objections to 'system-mongering and machinery-mongering' are equally forcefully directed at the opponents of Utilitarianism and Comtism, the dogmatic theologians. In Literature and Dogma, he opposes Israel - 'who

had but poetry and eloquence, and no system, and who did not mind contradicting himself' (Super VI, p.188) to the 'scientific' theology of the creed-makers, which with all its neat elaboration of detail he condemns because it is misapplied and wrong. The author of the Fourth Gospel is praised for imaginative power and poetry but criticised for his theoretical speculation and systematising tendency, (Super VI, p.297). The three Creeds, purporting to be 'purely a methodical arrangement of the admitted facts of Christianity' (p.345) are, he declares, far from 'the genuine teaching of Jesus', which is based on experience and not systematized theory.

In Arnold's view the trouble with systematizers, whether religious or anti-religious, liberal or illiberal, is that they 'attempt far too much'. 'If we want...to have what is admittedly certain and verifiable, we must content ourselves with very little' he writes in Literature and Dogma (Super VI, p.190). A few principles, well understood and verified by experience, are worth mountains of systematic speculation however attractively integrated, taken second-hand from others. Moreover rigidly constructed systems are unamenable to the Zeitgeist, resistant to the necessity for change, or if directed towards change (as, say, communism or utopianism) resistant to the altering circumstances which necessarily occur during the processes of change. Excessive systematizing also tends, for the individual, to inhibit 'spontaneity of consciousness' which (in Culture and Anarchy) Arnold praises as the invaluable 'governing idea of Hellenism'.

In condemning systematizers, however, Arnold is not against system in all its aspects. He fought for a 'national system' of education, for example, to counteract the random, hole-and-corner provision of schools for the bulk of the population before the Education Act of 1870; and to improve the system afterwards. He also believed in systematic study. 'For when we say that culture is, To know the best that has been thought and said in the world, we imply that, for culture, a system directly tending to this end

is necessary in our reading' (Super VI, p.162). And again, 'culture is indispensably necessary, and culture is reading with a purpose to guide it, and with system' (ibid.) But 'system' in this sense is far different from the kind of system related to a 'tyrannous theory' (Super VII, p.326), and is the servant not the master of its user. A sense of the danger in the kind of systematic theorising Arnold objected to is shared by a modern literary critic, Northrop Frye, who writes in The Anatomy of Criticism (1970)

Whenever we construct a system of thought to unite earth with heaven, the story of the Tower of Babel recurs: we discover that after all we can't quite make it, and that what we have in the meantime is a plurality of languages. (p.354)

Genuine communication, that is to say, is incompatible with artificially engineered thought constructs.

Arnold and epistemology

Given Arnold's distaste for systematic philosophy 'with principles coherent, interdependent, subordinate, and derivative' is it possible to deduce anything in the way of epistemological principles from his writing? It is not a simple task, but it is important to attempt it, for the questioning spirit in relation to religious matters which Arnold welcomed and sought to meet in Literature and Dogma has now broadened its influence in relation to teaching in general, and with a fear of 'indoctrination' in education comes a demand for justification and validation of what is taught in schools. The raison d'etre of Literature and Dogma was to meet the needs of 'those who "ask for the reason and authority for the things they have been taught to believe" (for)...Rude and hard reasoners as they are, they will never consent to admit, as a self-evident axiom, the preliminary assumption with which the churches start' (Super VI, p.150). That was in 1875. In The Concept of Education (Peters, 1973) J P White writes of 'teachers who are worried about indoctrination in schools today...Like myself (he writes), in my history teaching days, they have in mind, as paradigm cases of indoctrination, communist

systems of "political education" or, perhaps, the teaching of religion in Roman Catholic schools' (p.181). In the same collection of essays John Passmore seeks actively to encourage the critical spirit in pupils: 'teaching a child to be critical' involves 'encouraging him to look critically at the value of the performances in which he is taught to engage, as distinct from the level of achievement arrived at within such a performance' (p.198), and makes demands on his 'initiative, independence, courage and imagination'.

Verification

Arnold's primary response to the growth of critical questioning rests on the principle that 'whatever is to stand must rest upon something which is verifiable, not unverifiable' (Super VI, p.149). Already in St Paul and Protestantism he had asserted that 'the scientific sense in us, the sense which seeks exact knowledge, calls for...verification' (Super VI, p.9), and had taken Calvinism to task for carelessness in this respect. The Puritan interpretation of St Paul, he believed had got its priorities wrong because of this neglect:

And first let us premise what we mean in this matter by primary and secondary, essential and subordinate...We mean, so far as truth is concerned, a greater or less agreement with facts which can be verified, and a greater or less power of explaining them. What essentially characterises a religious teacher, and gives him his permanent worth and vitality, is, after all, just the scientific value of his teaching, its correspondence with important facts and the light it throws upon them. (Super VI, p.8)

Without entering into the argument about St Paul and Calvinism, we can see here something of Arnold's view of the principle of verification: that it is a scientific principle, based on observed facts and seeking to explain their correspondence or agreement. In religious matters, as he writes elsewhere, verification may be hard to come by: 'If we want here, as we do want, to have what is admittedly certain and verifiable, we must content ourselves with very little' (Super VI, p.190). 'Evidence has three degrees of force', Arnold writes in God and the Bible, 'demonstration probability, plausibility' (Super VII, p.278). In discussing the Fourth Gospel 'demonstration cannot really be reached at all. The data are

insufficient for it' (p.279); and 'plausibility, -such a display of ingenuity as makes people clap their hands and cry Well done! but does not seriously persuade them, - is not much worth a wise man's ambition-ing' (ibid.). 'There remains probability', which, in the absence of any demonstrable certainty based on inference from texts, depends upon

considerations drawn from experience of human nature, and from acquaintance with the history of the human spirit, which themselves guide our inferences from these texts. And what is the great help for interpreting aright the experience of human nature and the history of the human spirit, for getting at the fact, for discovering what is fact and what is not? Sound judgment and common sense, bred of much converse with real life and with practical affairs. (Super VII, pp.279-280)

For theory in these matters Arnold has little room; we may admire the ingenuity of the German biblical critics, he suggests, but their theories very seldom attain probability let alone demonstration. In Arnold's view observed facts can alone provide demonstration; tradition, interpreted with common sense, probability; and theory, only plausibility. Arnold is here close to Karl Popper's view of the scientist: 'It is important for him to remain in touch with reality, with practice, for those who overlook it have to pay by lapsing into scholasticism' (Popper, 1966, p.222). Both prefer a practical and piecemeal approach to 'verbal fireworks'. Arnold's view of probability is much akin to the linguistic philosopher A J Ayer's definition of 'verification in principle' in Language, Truth and Logic (1971):

It is necessary to draw a distinction between practical verifiability and verifiability in principle. Plainly we all understand, in many cases believe, propositions which we have not in fact taken steps to verify. Many of these are propositions which we could verify if we took enough trouble. But there remain a number of significant propositions, concerning matters of fact, which we could not verify even if we chose; simply because we lack the practical means of placing ourselves in the situation where the relevant observations could be made. (pp.48-49)

In such cases, where 'I do know what observations would decide it for me, if, as is theoretically conceivable, I were once in a position to make them...I say that the proposition is verifiable in principle, if not in practice, and is accordingly significant' (p.49). When A J Ayer cites the metaphysical pseudo-proposition 'the Absolute enters into, but is itself incapable of, evolution and progress' as a proposition 'not even in

principle verifiable' his view accords entirely with Arnold's (see pp. ^{105-6 and 120-121} above).

There would also be a measure of agreement between Arnold and Ayer in Ayer's contention that 'all utterances about the nature of God are nonsensical' (Ayer, 1971, p153), since Arnold objects to the 'licence of affirmation' of theologians regarding concepts which are beyond verification. But their views part company when Ayer asserts that the intuitions of a mystic are invalid or that linguistic philosophy has disposed of the argument from religious experiences for the existence of a god. (pp.156-157). In being unwilling to 'express the inexpressible' Arnold does not wish to deny the existence of transcendental (or, at least, immanent) power or to diminish our sense of awe towards the unknowable. For Arnold, experience as we shall see, is the test and proof of the validity of religion; and poetry is, by and large, the appropriate means of expressing religious truth. There is a truth of science and a truth of religion; and while 'assertions in scientific language must stand the tests of scientific examination' (Super VI, p.9), 'the scientific sense in us' does not deny 'the rights of the poetic sense, which employs a figured and imaginative language' (ibid.). It is all a question of appropriateness.

But to revert to Arnold's view of experience, he states in the Preface to Literature and Dogma that his object is to give to the Bible a real experimental basis, and keep on this basis throughout; instead of any basis of unverifiable assumption to start with, followed by a string of other unverifiable assumptions of the like kind, such as the received theology necessitates. (Super VI, p.151) and, of Christianity, that 'its grandeur and truth are far best brought out experimentally; and the thing is, to make people see this' (p.396) In a pragmatic vein, he asserts that experience is the test jointly of morality and religion. We may be at a loss to answer enquirers' questions about 'a Great Personal First Cause, who thinks and loves, the moral and intelligent Governor of the Universe' adumbrated by theologians;

But if, on the other hand, they ask: 'How are we to verify that there rules an enduring Power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness?' -we may answer at once: 'How? why as you verify that fire burns, - by

experience! Is is so; try it! you can try it; every case of conduct, of that which is more than three-fourths of your own life and of the life of all mankind, will prove it to you! Disbelieve it, and you will find out your mistakes as surely as, if you disbelieve that fire burns and put your hand into the fire, you will find out your mistake! Believe it, and you will find the benefit of it!" This is the first experience. (Super VI, p.370)

There is no doubt that a relationship between right conduct and its effects in terms of well-being is easier to test (at least in specific instances) than a relationship between the Universe and a Great Personal First Cause. But the generalized conclusion that 'there rules an enduring Power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness' is open to question, according to variations in individual experience. If I believe it, it is an act of faith rather than of experimental verification. However, Arnold states in Literature and Dogma that 'the cardinal rule of our present enquiry is that rule of Newton's: "Hypotheses non fingo"' (Super VI, p.275), and his usage of evidence here is largely in accord with that advocated by Newton in the passage from which the quotation comes:

I do not deal in hypotheses (writes Newton); for whatever is not deduced from phenomena is called a 'hypothesis'; and hypotheses (whether metaphysical, physical, occult or mechanical) have no place in experimental philosophy. In this sphere of study propositions are deduced from phenomena and give rise to universals by means of inductive reasoning.*

Arnold's reasoning is, like Newton's essentially inductive; but it might be better to call it, in today's terminology, 'experiential' rather than 'experimental', since in the testing of the proposition there is little or no control of the variables involved. Arnold's main point, however, is that in adopting a pragmatic approach to religion the emphasis is shifted from the 'metaphysical' authority of learned religion and the 'miraculous' authority of popular religion (Super VI, pp.243-244) to an

*My translation from the Latin quoted in R H Super's notes (Super VI, p.485)

'Hypotheses non fingo. Quicquid enim ex phaenomenis non deducitur, Hypothesis vocanda est; and hypotheses, seu Metaphysice, seu Physice, seu Qualitatum Occultarum seu Mechanicae, in Philosophia Experimentalis locum non habent. In hoc Philosophia Propositiones deducuntur ex phaenomenis, and redduntur generales per inductionem.' (Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica, conclusion of Book III) see Super VI, (Notes) p.485

authority verifiable from personal experience. Where it differs from Newton is that the latter is dealing with the externally verifiable phenomena of natural science, whereas Arnold is concerned with the less easily observable sphere of interior human nature and motivation. Verification, in Arnold's view can be an inward phenomenon, since he writes approvingly of Luther making 'an inward verifying movement' with 'the individual conscience once more the base of operations' (Super VI, p.353). Conscience thus becomes the means of verification as well as being (as the internalised recognition of such Power as makes for righteousness) that which is being verified - making Arnold's reasoning somewhat tautological. Perhaps there is no escaping this - unless we are prepared to jettison conscience altogether - for our conscience, nurtured by experience, becomes in turn one of our chief means of interpreting it.

It is no doubt largely for this reason that Arnold advocated a broad culture and wide literary experience. Since by this means we can at least partially overcome the limitations of our own inevitably relatively narrow and limited experience. Here again his view is close to that advocated by Karl Popper in The Open Society and its Enemies. Both approve the kind of attitude which admits that 'I may be wrong and you may be right, and by an effort, we may get nearer to the truth' (Popper 1966, p.225); both approve an "attitude of reasonableness"... very similar to the scientific attitude, to the belief that in the search for truth we need cooperation, and that, with the help of argument, we can in time attain something like objectivity' (ibid.) - or 'disinterestedness'; both recognize that 'Reason, like language, can be said to be a product of social life' (ibid.) (a concept central to Arnold's interpretation of the Zeitgeist); and Arnold's pragmatism is akin to Popper's 'piecemeal approach' to social engineering. But whereas Popper (like A J Ayer) has no room for mysticism, Arnold (although with a different conception of it) believes that it has its place. Discussing the Pauline conception of faith, he writes in a significant passage:

It is both mystical and rational; and it enlists in its service the best forces of both worlds, - the world of reason and morals, and the world of sympathy and emotion. The world of reason and duty has an excellent clue to action, but wants motive-power; the world of sympathy and influence has an irresistible force of motive-power, but wants a clue for directing its exertion. The danger of the one world is weariness in well doing; the danger of the other is sterile raptures and immoral fanaticism. (St P & P, Super VI, p.47)

It will be seen that Arnold here sidesteps Popper's main objection to mysticism by himself rejecting fanaticism (which is what Popper fears for *in Hegelianism developed to its ultimate conclusions* example *in state totalitarianism*). Also evident again here is Arnold's distinction between the 'truth of science' and the 'truth of religion' and the need for their harmonization (Super III, p.74). Truth of science is analytical, exploratory; truth of religion relates to the emotions, is motivational. Scientific verification - demonstration resting on experiment and observation - is vital, and 'our theologians...suffer from having too little' (Super VI, p.408); but it is not enough. Our emotions and our sense for beauty are as important as our demand for exact knowledge (Super VI, p.409); art is a vital complement to science. Hence Arnold develops the concept of 'imaginative reason' as complementary to his concern for verification.

Imaginative reason

Although Arnold accepts that we must finally remain ignorant of transcendental powers, if such there be, calling them 'the unexplored and inexpressible' (Super VI, p.200), and despite the fact that he rejects miracle and the supernatural, he recognizes that it is quite natural that the spirit of man should entertain hopes and anticipations, beyond what it actually knows and can verify' (Super VI, p.212). He also rejects as futile the species of 'rationalism' which endeavours 'to reduce all the supernatural ⁱⁿ (the scriptures) to real events' (Super VI, p.268). Factual details of events recorded in scriptural writing can never be known or positively recovered by research, since the circumstances and viewpoints at the time of their recording were so different from our own. The kinds of truths embodied in such writing can rarely be penetrated by reason alone; they are more accessible to the imagination.

Arnold recognizes in God and the Bible a close and vital relationship between imagination, religion and conduct:

For the power of Christianity has been in the immense emotion which it has excited; in its engaging, for the government of man's conduct, the mighty forces of love, reverence, gratitude, hope, pity and awe, - all that host of allies which Wordsworth includes under the one name imagination...

Popular Christianity has enjoyed abundantly and with profit this help from the imagination to virtue and conduct. I have always thought, therefore, that merely to destroy the illusions of popular Christianity was indefensible. Time, besides, was sure to do it; but when it is done, the whole work of again cementing the alliance between the imagination and conduct remains to be effected... (Super VII, pp.377-378)

We are here concerned with imaginative apprehension - the recognition of truths inaccessible to reason alone without a degree of imaginative empathy; and yet with imagination sometimes accessible even when embodied in illusions erroneously perpetuated by tradition.

There is also the creative and artistic use of imagination in religion to be taken into account. Arnold acknowledges the concept of 'imaginative intellect' in a discussion of St John's Gospel (God and the Bible, Super VII, p.323), although he denies that this is an appropriate term for this evangelist, believing that he is writing 'in good faith' as a recorder rather than as a 'freely inventing artist' for which the term would be more appropriate. The freely inventing artist draws on his imagination to create character and situation ex nihilo, or at least, from the chaos of the world's multitudinousness; and he draws on his intellect, or reason, to make his characters and situations credible; embodiments of recognisable truths, though not of facts.

For guidance as to conduct we are often caught between adherence to dogmatic rules (unexamined fairs, sanctioned by tradition, to be followed mechanically) and intellectual understanding dependent upon facts of which we are as yet ignorant 'subject to further research'. The choice between moral automatism and intellectual paralysis can be circumvented by imaginative reason. The parables of Jesus are good examples, cited by Arnold, of poetic penetration bypassing both rabbinical rules and logical exposition. They compel inferential interpretation

and are essentially literary devices. Arnold, comparing poetry with the art of the painter or sculptor, finds it 'more intellectual...more interpretive' for 'along with the plastic representation it utters the idea, it thinks' (Neiman, 1960, p.238):

But it thinks emotionally, and herein ^{it} differs from science, and is more of a stay to us. Poetry gives the idea, but it gives it touched with beauty, heightened by emotion. That is what we feel to be interpretive for us, to satisfy us - thought, but thought invested with beauty, with emotion. Science thinks, but not emotionally. It adds thought to thought, accumulates the elements of a synthesis which will never be complete until it is touched with beauty and emotion; and when it is touched with this, it has passed out of the sphere of science. (ibid, p.238)

Poetry for Arnold is 'more explicative than art' more 'solid' than 'systematic philosophy', more refreshing and satisfying than science, and more reliable than religious dogma. In an Introduction to Poetry (from which the above quotation comes) Arnold expresses this view forcibly in the final paragraph. 'There is', he writes:

not a dogma that does not threaten to dissolve, not a tradition that is not shaken, not a fact which has its historical character free from question. Compare the stability of Shakespeare with the stability of the Thirty-Nine Articles! Our religion has materialised itself in the fact - the supposed fact; it has attached its emotion to the fact. For poetry the idea is everything; the rest is its world of illusion, of divine illusion; it attaches its emotion to the idea, the idea is the fact. The strongest part of our religion today is its unconscious poetry. The future of poetry is immense, because in conscious poetry, where it is worthy of its high destinies, our race, as time goes on, will find an even surer and surer stay. (Neiman, 1960, p.239)* (also Super, IX, p.63)

Here, essentially, lies Arnold's justification for 'imaginative reason': it provides a 'stay' for the mind, in the form of sustaining ideas, while our conception of facts and dogmas undergoes changes forced upon it by the movement of the Zeitgeist.

The conjunction of reason and imagination in the moral sphere stressed by Arnold is also seen to be of importance by Karl Popper:

The rational and imaginative analysis of the consequences of a moral theory (he writes) has a certain analogy in scientific method...But there is a fundamental difference. In the case of a scientific theory, our decision depends upon the results of experiments. If these confirm the theory, we may accept it until we find a better one. If they contradict

*For a revised version of this passage opening Arnold's essay The Study of Poetry, see Super IX, p.161, and pp.181-2 of this thesis

the theory, we reject it. But in the case of a moral theory, we can only confront its consequences with our conscience. And while the verdict of experiments does not depend upon ourselves, the verdict of our conscience does. (Popper, 1966, p.233)

Thus Popper, although he does not use the term 'imaginative reason' or connect it directly with art, recognizes, like Arnold, the need for it. And, like Arnold, Popper sees the use of the imagination as a powerful antidote to dogmatism:

It appears that rationalism* must encourage the use of imagination because it needs it, while irrationalism must tend to discourage it. The very fact that rationalism is critical, whilst irrationalism must tend towards dogmatism (where there is no argument, nothing is left but full acceptance or flat denial) leads in this direction. Criticism always demands a certain degree of imagination, whilst dogmatism suppresses it. (Popper, 1966, p.239)

In Arnold's writing the conjunction of imagination and reason crops up in a variety of forms if we attend carefully to its undertones. His promotion in Culture and Anarchy of the expression 'sweetness and light' is an example, where 'sweetness' stands for the heart and the imagination and 'light' for the intellect, reason and logic. Again his frequent references to what he calls the 'sweet reasonableness' of Jesus bring these two elements together. And in his long poem The Scholar Gipsy we have the 'scholar' (standing for intellect and reason) conjoined with the 'gipsy' (of whom we are told in Glanvil's account, Arnold's source, 'that they had a traditional kind of learning among them, and could do wonders by the power of imagination').

Suggestion

In his understanding of the importance of the imagination, Arnold had an intuitive grasp of the significance of the power of suggestion, and recognized before Freud, Jung and the development of modern psychology, that through suggestion, the imagination has often more power over our actions than have reason or willpower. In Literature and Dogma, for example, he asks himself how necessary emotion can be brought to bear

*Popper uses the term 'rationalism' in its widest sense, including (and not in opposition to) empiricism.

on moral ideas to make them effective in practice, and answers: 'Why, how does one get to feel much about any matter whatever? By dwelling upon it, by staying our thoughts upon it, by having it perpetually in our mind' (Super VI, pp.178-179). He recognizes how words and phrases, echoing continually in the mind, gather meaning to themselves. Hence his concentration, in discussing culture, on our engaging ourselves with 'the best that has been thought and said in the world' (my italics). His advocacy of scriptural material rests on this principle. The suggestiveness of Jesus's teaching lies in its expression in 'pregnant sentences, gnomic sayings' (Super VII, p.308), rather than 'set speeches'; and he applauds the 'maxim-like' character of Jesus's teaching (Super VII, p.327). Intellectual and emotional growth from suggestion is largely imperceptible. Arnold notes that St John 'plants his loggia' suggestively in his gospel (Super VII, p.292); writing of the Old Testament, he speaks of 'an immense poetry growing round and investing an immortal truth' (my italics), (Super VII, p.370); and of the New Testament he describes how - for good or ill - miracle stories 'grow' from earlier loggia (Super VII, p.351). Writing in Literature and Dogma of 'suggestions and stimulations' he asserts 'Hardly a day passes but we have some experience of them' (Super VI, p.181). We are commonly unconscious of these, but:

The moment we seriously attend to conscience, to the suggestions which concern practice and conduct, we can see plainly enough from which source a suggestion comes, and that the suggestions from one source are to overrule those from the other. (Super VI, p.292)

Arnold must have been aware of early developments in the field of hypnotism in which suggestion plays such a vital role. Indeed his originally proposed title for The Scholar Gipsy was 'The First Mesmerist' - listed in his Notebook in 1849, and changed subsequently to The Wandering Mesmerist' (v. Bryson, 1964, p.790) before the final title was reached. (Interestingly enough the source of the poem was in Glanvil's work entitled The Vanity of Dogmatising which Arnold appears to have read in 1845. The attraction of the title for him is clearly apparent from his later prose writing.)

In recognizing the positive, therapeutic power of suggestion Arnold was not ignorant of its negative side, of its dangers. Discussing in St Paul and Protestantism the puritan view of sin, he disapproves of any absorbed contemplation of it: 'Sin is not a monster to be mused on, but an impotence to be got rid of. All thinking about it, beyond what is indispensable for the firm effort to get rid of it, is waste of energy and waste of time.' (Super VI, p.35). At the same time he understands that counter-suggestion, rather than will-power, will prove the most likely antidote to morbid brooding:

But how to find the energy and power to bring all those self-seeking tendencies of the flesh, those multitudinous, swarming, eager and incessant impulses, into obedience to the central tendency? Mere commanding and forbidding is of no avail, and only irritates opposition in the desires it tries to control. It even enlarges their power, because it makes us feel our impotence, and the confusion caused by their ungoverned working is increased by our being filled with a deepened sense of disharmony, remorse and dismay. (Super VI, p.32)

In this penetrating and significant passage, we see an early recognition of the psychological principle of the Law of Reversed Effect (v. Hartland, 1971, p.37).

Arnold praises Emerson for his style because 'his main points recur again and again, and become fixed in the memory' (Super X, p.177) - a comment which helps to explain the repetitiveness of Arnold's own style. He saw the repetition of key ideas and suggestive phrases as an important means of implanting ideas in the reader's mind, so that they would grow steadily, imperceptibly, gathering meaning to themselves.

For educationalists suggestion is a two-edged concept; but whether we employ it or reject it, it is important that, like Arnold, we recognize its significance. Suggestibility appears to be a function of intelligence. It has positive, but by no means infallible, survival value. We may, like lemmings, be led by our suggestibility to destruction; on the other hand we may make valuable contributions to our society in response to early educational suggestions. Suggestibility is not necessarily reduced by education. A dogmatic education, for example, tends to induce us to accept

the current, major intellectual suggestions of the day: witness the learned doctors who rejected the discoveries of Copernicus or Galileo; the literary and scientific intelligentzia who adapted to Hitler's Nazi regime; or the South African Christian leaders' advocacy of "Apartheid". A sound education will involve not only the positive, creative and morally unexceptionable use of suggestion, but also an understanding of the way suggestion works so that pupils can be protected from its potential dangers.

In creative literature we are led by suggestion along contrary and irreconcilable paths of action and value judgment as we follow the thoughts and behavior of diverse characters. Because these irreconcilables are temporarily harmonized within a satisfying aesthetic framework we are helped to bear paradox, tentativeness, etc., in our daily lives.

Tolerance and eclecticism

Just as complex or penetrating literature provides us with a variety of viewpoints, so can we raise our threshold of tolerance by a wide variety of reading. Hence Arnold's stress on this aspect of 'culture', and its moral significance. Bonnerot (1947) makes an important observation to this effect:

Il faut savoir...qu'Arnold a puisé son inspiration morale ailleurs, chez des auteurs nombreux, appartenants à des pays et des temps très divers, qu'une part de son originalité est précisément dans son éclectisme, dans sa faculté d'accueil qui lui fait chercher ses "points d'appui" dans la Bible aussi bien que chez les grands auteurs profanes. (Bonnerot, 1947, p.241)

Bonnerot sees eclecticism as a feature of Arnold's originality, and so does Robbins (1959): 'The distinguishing marks of Arnold's religious thought may be seen as eclecticism and an individual use of the principles of ^maccommodation, accommodation to a large middle range of religiously inclined but dissatisfied people' (p.166). As for the 'principle of accommodation', reference to God and the Bible will show that Arnold preaches what he himself practices, for he approves in the teaching of Jesus the use of the 'language of accommodation' to meet the hearers' understanding and lead them on (Super VII, p.359). Arnold's use

of the language of accommodation has already been referred to (see p.37 above). A striking example of his eclecticism occurs in Culture and Anarchy (Super V) where Arnold delineates and reconciles the contribution of Greek and Hebrew thought to Western culture. 'Aggressively religious people', writes Sengupta (1961), 'often blamed him for his stress on Hellenism; they unfortunately failed to see that Arnold had not condemned Hebraism; he had actually effected a reconciliation between the two; for he believed that between thinking and acting, conduct and culture, Hellenism and Hebraism there was no incompatibility' (p.597). Robbins sees the composition of Arnold's thought resulting from his eclecticism as a valuable mix, flexible yet positive: 'His position in his early poems and letters is compounded of religious agnosticism, philosophical tentativeness and moral certitude' (p.166) - a satisfactory recipe for living and coping with the inevitable tensions of modern life. And he sees the 'practical idealism' of Arnold's values as 'a means of reconciling the persisting differences of Christian, scientist and humanist' (p.213).

Certainly Arnold's eclecticism militates against narrowness and exclusiveness of outlook. He praises Abelard, Lessing and Herder because they 'humanised knowledge; because they broadened the basis of life and intelligence; because they worked powerfully to diffuse sweetness and light, to make reason and the will of God prevail' (Culture and Anarchy, Super V, p.113). This contrasts forcibly with the view of T S Eliot that 'it is essential for the preservation of the culture of a minority that it should continue to be a minority culture'. This may be true, in fact, but to promote it as a virtue signals an esoteric view of culture totally at variance with Arnold's view.

Eclecticism is often frowned upon because it suggests the indiscriminate and random picking-up of ideas. This was far from Arnold's concept, which called for a high degree of critical selectiveness:

To read to good purpose we must read a great deal, and be content not to

use the whole, or nearly the whole, of what we read...(for)things are on such a scale, and progress so gradual, and what one man can do is so bounded, that the moment we press the whole of what any writer says, we fall into error' (Super VI, p.155)

The thing to know with a writer is 'where he is all himself and his best self, where he shows his power, where he goes to the heart of the matter, where he gives us what no other man gives us, or gives us so well' (ibid.). Arnold continually employs this principle of selectivity in his own writing, comparing the relative virtues and shortcomings of writers, ideas and institutions in such a way as to produce a kind of critical profile, or series of profiles. For example, in A Comment on Christmas, he maps out various features, attractive and repulsive in turn, of Catholicism, Anglicanism and Dissenting Protestantism - in each of which he sees virtues, limitations and excesses (Super X, p.235). Similarly in Literature and Dogma, in discussing the frequent narrowness of the outlook of missionaries he makes comparative relative observations on Buddhism, Brahminism and 'Mohametanism' (Super VI, p.382), observing that:

the non-Christian religions are not to the wise man mere monsters; he knows they have much good and truth in them. He knows that Mohametanism, and Brahminism and Buddhism are not what the missionaries call them; and he knows, too, how really unfit the missionaries are to cope with them. (Super VI, p.381)

Terms such as 'relative', 'fluid', 'flexible', 'proportion' occur frequently in Arnold's writing, in passages indicating the need to break down rigid, artificial barriers and bring things, ideas and institutions into new comparative relationships. In a letter, for example, to his brother 'when commenting on a new volume of Ruskin's Modern Painters', he recognized 'that the one thing needful was not the perception of isolated verities, but of the ordering and interconnections of truth' (Neiman, 1968, p.81). This view in no way contradicts what has been said above (see pp.170-72) about Arnold's hostility to system-makers; it is simply in accordance with the principles expressed by Locke that knowledge is 'nothing but the perception of the connexion and agreement, or disagreement and repugnancy, of any of our ideas' (Locke, 1690, IV). Arnold

would certainly have approved A N Whitehead's opposition to 'inert ideas' in education- 'ideas that are merely received into the mind without being utilised, or tested, or thrown into fresh combinations' (Whitehead, 1954, p.13). And Whitehead's view of culture is not far from Arnold's: 'Culture is activity of thought, and receptiveness to beauty and humane feeling. Scraps of information have nothing to do with it. A merely well-informed man is the most useless bore on God's earth'. (ibid.).

Arnold's eclecticism has nothing to do with the random collection of 'isolated verities', but is a means towards breadth of vision; and from this, in turn, towards a wider tolerance and understanding of the human condition. The process of education for tolerance, Arnold believed, should begin in school. He describes with approval the approach in a French Catholic girls' school at Fontenay to a lesson dealing with a variety of religious questions, delighting in the fact that 'really these girls were led to treat them in the same large and free, but at the same time tolerant, sympathetic, and pious spirit, in which M Pecaut treated them himself' (Super XI, p.96). The development of tolerant attitudes depends upon 'turning a stream of fresh and free thought upon our stock notions and habits' (Super V, p.233), and upon developing a 'wide, large acquaintance with the human spirit, and with man's ways of thinking and using words' (Super VI, pp.408-409), nourished by literary experience. Arnold was deeply concerned, however, at what he felt was the inadequacy of much state education in England in humanizing, or civilizing its pupils. A random stock of positive knowledge and the ability to read the newspapers was not enough; it was 'qualities of tolerance, understanding and critical detachment' that, in Arnold's view the 'rising classes' really needed (v. Connell, 1950, p.181).

Morality and religion

Morality, religion and culture are, for Arnold, closely intertwined. Conduct (or morality) required culture (Super VI, p.407), and both scientific and literary culture 'are requisite in the interests of

religion itself' (Super VI, p.409). Religion and culture share, basically, the same aims - 'to make reason and the will of God prevail' (Super V, p.91); and to some extent the same means:

Religion says: The Kingdom of God is within you; and culture, in like manner, places human perfection in an internal condition, in the growth and predominance of our humanity proper, as distinguished from our animality. (Super V, pp.93-4)

In Arnold's view culture and religion work side by side essentially to promote morality, or conduct; 'in praising culture, we have never denied (he writes) that conduct, not culture, is three-fourths of human life' (Super VI, p.407). The increasing rejection of the Bible as a means of acquiring moral insights, because of the Bible's association with questionable Church dogmas, alarmed Arnold because he felt the alternative contemporary sources of moral guidance on offer were inadequate: 'Take a course of the Bible first, and then a course of Benjamin Franklin, Horace Greeley, Jeremy Bentham, and Mr Herbert Spencer, see which has the most effect, which satisfies you most, which gives you the most moral force...' (Super VI, p.371). Behind this observation lies, not only a temperamental attachment to tradition, but a preference for the suggestiveness of the poetry of scriptural material as against the discursive rule-making of systematic philosophy.

The moral law, for Arnold, is a scientific fact. He agrees that Littré and the Comtists may be correct in deducing the evolution of principles of conduct from the human instincts of self-preservation and reproduction (Super VI, p.287), and that the two basic kinds of human misconduct - faults of temper and faults of sensuality - are associated with these instincts. But 'however this law may have originated', 'the moral law...is in our actual experience among the greatest of facts' (Super VI, p.30). And

the best confirmation of the scientific validity of the importance which Paul attaches to the law of righteousness, the law of reason and conscience, God as moral law, is to be found in its agreement with the importance attached to this law by teachers the most unlike him; since in the eye of science an experience gains...by having universality...' (ibid.).

Cooperation with the 'universal order' brings harmony; disregarding it, disharmony; 'In conformity to the will of God, as we religiously name the moral order, is our peace and happiness' (Super VI, p.32).

Catherine Runcie sums up Arnold's position in the following words:

Unlike Mill, Arnold accepts the anthropomorphized prediction of deity, not to refute its implications, but to reinforce the notion of some power akin to God in the universe; and unlike Bunsen, he reinforces this notion not by some transcendental a priori, but by 'proof' that historical man actually felt the "not ourselves that makes for righteousness" operative in the world. Arnold thereby comes to believe in a moral universe, one in which value is inherent. (Runcie, 1969, Footnote, p.29)

That Arnold's view is over-sanguine has been suggested by comparing it with Schweitzer's (see above pp.252-4) which seems to take a more realistic cosmic view; although their outlook in relation to practical aspects of human conduct itself would be relatively close.

Arnold's eudaemonism has also been referred to above (see pp.251-2)

He insists on a relationship between conduct and happiness. Emerson (along with Wordsworth) is praised for his stress on 'happiness, in labour, righteousness and veracity; in all the life of the spirit, happiness and hope' (Super X, p.184). And Carlyle condemned for his 'perverse attitude towards happiness' which 'cuts him off from hope' - for Carlyle 'fiercely attacks the desire for happiness' (Super X, p.183). Arnold disdains 'the morbid sentimentalities of Protestantism about man's natural vileness' (Super VI, p.206), preferring to concentrate on 'the sense of life, of being truly alive, which accompanies righteousness' (Super VI, p.404). Self-denial, 'necrosis' or denying one's old self, is approved for the happiness - 'the sense of going right, hitting the mark, succeeding' - it entails (Super VI, p.293). But the fanatical self-denial of the early martyrs and of certain modern puritans is rejected (Super VI, p.301, 339). Necrosis should be adequate, but not excessive. Related, perhaps, to this short-term optimism in relation to individual behavior is a degree of long-term optimism on a broad front. In A Comment on Christmas, for example, we find a confident belief in the end of an age - bringing the dissolution of aristocratic power and wealth and the

dawning of an age of democracy (Super X, pp.237-238). This, for Arnold, was the general movement of the Zeitgeist. A century later we tend to think (in theory, though much less in practice) in terms of the recognition of human rights as an aspect of this evolution. For Arnold this was less clear: 'No man (he writes) who simply follows his own consciousness, is aware of any claims, any rights, whatever; what he gets of good makes him thankful, what he gets of evil seems to him natural' (Super VI, p.188). His tendency is to stress individual responsibilities (e.g. Super VI, pp294-295) rather than rights.

Natural religion and the nature of faith

Arnold's description of religion as 'morality touched by emotion' met a hostile reaction from some quarters which was much publicized. D G James, for example, writes how 'It is well known that in Ethical Studies, published in 1876, F H Bradley turned on Arnold and gave him no mercy' (James, 1961, p.77). This is not the place for a detailed critique of Bradley's objection to Arnold's use of this phrase and to other aspects of Arnold's Literature and Dogma (Bradley, 1927). Bradley's exercise (which turns upon Arnold in its Concluding Remarks from p.315 onwards for several pages) results from a wilful misreading of Arnold, lacking in what Arnold would describe as 'literary tact'. Perversely selecting a number of Arnold's phrases and ideas out of context, Bradley kicks them out by the back door, only to readmit many of them through a side window dressed up in abstract terminology. As a sample of Bradley's exposition which is supposed to have eliminated Arnold we have, for example: 'For morals the ideal self was an "ought", an "is to be" that is not; the object of religion is that same ideal self, but here it no longer only ought to be, but also is' (Bradley, 1927, p.319). The author omits to mention how this mysterious 'is' becomes. And again:

In the very essence of the religious consciousness we find the relation of our will to the real ideal self. We find ourselves, ^{this} for that will, against the object as the real ideal will, which is not ourselves, and which stands to us in such a way that, though real, it is to be

realized, because it is all and the whole reality. (ibid., p.320).

'A statement' the author suggests, 'which may stagger us; but...a simple fact of the religious consciousness' (ibid.)! The difference between Arnold and Bradley is that Arnold recognizes the shortcomings of metaphysical abstraction, 'the impossibility of finally delineating the unknown, and prefers the suggestive tentativeness of metaphor; Bradley believes he has positively pin-pointed aspects of infinity by means of his neat logical exposition.

Since Bradley, other philosophers (mostly because of a renewed interest in the complexities of language) have moved closer to Arnold's conception, either by the rejection of metaphysics or by expressing themselves in a form, closely in keeping with Arnold's. Arnold's 'morality touched by emotion' is echoed, for example, by Edward Sapir, in Culture, Language and Personality: '...Only when one's philosophy of life is vitalized by emotion does it take on the character of religion' (Sapir, 1966, p.125). And, on a different level, the general semanticist, Hayakawa in Language in Thought and Action, parallels Arnold's distinction between the delineation and motivation of morals when he writes: 'Science makes us able to co-operate; the arts enlarge our sympathies so that we become willing to co-operate' (Hayakawa, 1966, p.135)

In God and the Bible Arnold develops his conception of the evolution of religion from natural law:

Man and his history begin, we say, when he becomes distinctly conscious of feelings, which in a long preparatory period of obscure growth, he may have been forming. Then he calls this habit, - acquired by a process which he does not recollect, - nature, and he gives effect to it in fixed customs, rules, laws, and institutions. His religion consists in acknowledging and reverencing the awful sanctions with which this right way for man has, he believes, been invested by the mighty not ourselves which surrounds us... (Super VII, p.225)

Here again, is a further expression of the idea of religion as 'morality' (here natural law) touched by 'emotion' (the awe and reverence felt towards the Power 'not ourselves' seeming to sanction our apprehension of right conduct). Arnold's distinction between 'natural' and 'revealed' religion has been given already (see chapter 4, p.107). Revelation, for Arnold, is no more esoteric than nature. His view of Nature itself,

derived from Spinoza and Goethe and reinforced by his devotion to Wordsworth, is of a power impressing itself upon us by its grandeur; composing us by its rhythms and at times by its tranquility; filling and satisfying our imagination by its majesty; and finally energizing us (if we respond to it) to joyful activity (see Harvey, 1969, p.50). Its potential moral influence is expressed by Arnold in a poem originally simply entitled 'Sonnet' which in 1853 was used as the motto for Arnold's poems as a whole:

Quiet Work

One lesson, Nature, let me learn of thee,
One lesson which in every wind is blown,
One lesson of two duties kept at one
Though the loud world proclaims their enmity -

Of toil unsevered from tranquility!
Of labour, that in lasting fruit outgrows
Far noisier schemes, accomplished in repose!
Too great for haste, too high for rivalry!

Yes, while on earth a thousand discords ring,
Man's fitful uproar mingling with his toil,
Still do thy sleepless ministers move on,

Their glorious tasks in silence perfecting;
Still working, blaming still our vain turmoil,
Labourers that shall not fail, when man is gone.
(Allott, 1965, pp106-107)

The concept of steady, imperceptible, tranquil growth discussed earlier (p²⁸³⁻/₂₈₄) is shown here to have its origin, apparently, in Arnold's response to Nature. The same evolutionary doctrine, applied to the development of Christianity, is applauded by Arnold when he quotes Dr Newman's conception of its growth:

Development is not an effect of wishing or resolving, or of forced enthusiasm, or of any mechanism of reasoning, or of any mere subtlety of intellect; but comes of its own innate power of expansion within the mind in its season, though with the use of reflexion and argument and original thought, more or less as it may happen, with a dependence on the ethical growth of the mind itself, and with a reflex influence upon it. (quoted in St Paul and Protestantism, Super VI, pp88-89)

'It is impossible', Arnold comments, 'to point out more sagaciously and expressively the natural, spontaneous, free character of true development; how such a development must follow laws of its own, may often require vast periods of time, cannot be hurried, cannot be stopped' (ibid.).

In Nature, thus apprehended, Arnold finds the 'Eternal non-ourselves' by which he designates one conception of God. E K Chambers (1947) is puzzled by Arnold's 'not ourselves', commenting: 'I should have rather expected him to hold that the human tendency to righteousness came from no outside source, but was part of our "instinct"' (pp.103-104). This seems to arise from a misconception of Nature, excluding ourselves as one of its manifestations. Arnold, bearing in mind that we too are part of nature, surely means 'more than ourselves' (i.e. not merely ourselves alone) and not simply something different from ourselves; though that part of nature which has power over us rather than that over which we have power. We may note his approving quotation of Emerson: 'There is a power above and behind us, and we are the channels of its communication' (Super X, p.178) which suggests the apprehension of a power which operates both within and beyond ourselves.

There is a, possibly apocryphal, story of an American 'Society for Pragmatic Mystics', with the motto: 'Unscrew the inscrutable and demyst the mystical'! Arnold would not have joined such a society, despite his aversion to metaphysics and his tendency towards pragmatism. The lines in The Scholar Gipsy:

Still nursing the unconquerable hope,
Still clutching the inviolable shade

(Allott, 1965, p.342)

typically represent an acceptance of mystery which the poet shares here with his subject, the Scholar Gipsy. Yet despite this, or perhaps because of this, willing acceptance of mystery, Arnold sees no conflict between religious faith and reason providing no demands are made in the shape of fidelity to metaphysics. On this issue Arnold is forced to part company with Dr Newman who believes that '"The moral trial involved in faith"..."lies in the submission of the reason to external realities partially disclosed"', and that '"Faith is, in its very nature, the acceptance of what our reason cannot reach, simply and absolutely upon testimony"' (Super VI, pp312-313). In Arnold's view if we avoid tempting

our reason too far with metaphysics, faith is a very simple matter.

It is:

Neither the submission of the reason, not is it the acceptance simply and absolutely upon testimony of what reason cannot reach. Faith is: the being able to cleave to a power of goodness appealing to our higher and real self, not our lower and apparent self. (Super VI, p.315)

(Similarly, prayer, rather than being a species of esoteric conjuration, is for Arnold, simply an 'energy of aspiration towards the Eternal Not ourselves' (Super VI, p.190, footnote); an orientation of our 'higher self' with the power of goodness insofar as we are able to apprehend it.) The motive power for faith is not simply 'the moral motive that inwardness, mildness, and self-renouncement make for man's happiness' (Super VI, p.229) - though this has its place - but a 'far surer ground' which unselfconsciously confirms this, 'in personal devotion to Jesus Christ, who brought the doctrine to his disciples and made a passage for it into their hearts' (ibid.). Thus (leaving aside the question of doctrinal bias in the agent) the power of suggestion, and of imaginative reason are brought to bear again, in place of rigid adherence to credal statements straining the intellect. Under pressure of the Zeitgeist the 'false science' of these metaphysical speculations which have been 'blocking up the view' must go, (Super VI, p.349). For Arnold held, like Kant in his Prologomena, that 'to patch up the crazy guilt of metaphysics, or to give it a new pattern...is not what the world needs' (quoted by Popper, 1966, p.248). He recognized, too, the fact that deification is always easier than discipleship: the one is primarily mental - a matter of words - the other involves action, 'conduct'. In the Preface to Literature and Dogma, he expresses this belief forcibly: 'the fundamental thing for Christians is not the incarnation but the imitation of Christ' (Super VI, p.146). Like Karl Popper, Arnold believed that (in Popper's words) 'we need hope' for 'to act, to live without hope goes beyond our strength. But we do not need more, and we must not be given more. We do not need certainty. Religion...should not be a substitute for dreams and wish-fulfilment; it should resemble neither the holding of a ticket in a lottery, nor the

holding of a policy in an insurance company' (Popper, 1966, p.279).

The putative rewards of such a 'ticket' or 'insurance policy' - 'The materialistic future state, the materialistic kingdom of God, of our popular religion' - will, in Arnold's view, 'dissolve "like some unsubstantial vision faded"' (Super VI, p.145). Such misplaced materialism must give way to a more spiritual apprehension, compatible with a realistic and rational view of the world.

Despite this breadth of view, Arnold is occasionally guilty of somewhat extravagant claims for Christianity (as well as for the bias already noted). Phrases like 'none other saves' or the idea that the world 'can be shown...to be moving necessarily towards the triumph of Christianity (but divested of its Aberglaube, or superstitious accretions) (Super VI, p.402) - such phrases jar upon the modern ear (except perhaps the fundamentalist ear). However, they must be seen in context, in relation to Arnold's audience and the 'language of accommodation' he was obliged to use to communicate his ideas. Nevertheless, his tendency towards rationalism stopped short of a totally impersonal and unpoetical 'secular morality', since he believed that this would fail to have the holding and motivating power which a religious faith (albeit severely modified) can provide.

For the scientific materialist, or secular humanist, the power of man's mind appears to be almost infinite; its achievements depending solely upon the extent to which the laws of the universe can be ascertained and organized; and this is felt to be largely a question of time rather than of potential capacity (v. Henderson, The Unbridled Ego, 1978). For the transcendental theist, on the other hand, man's mental powers are regarded as essentially finite, functioning within the scope and will of the infinite mind of an all-knowing creator, postulated to fill the gap left by man's finitude. For Arnold, as for a number of other humanists, the relative finitude of man's mind is recognized without the need being felt to assume the existence of an omniscient mind elsewhere, transcending,

embracing or permeating the universe. Neither his Zeitgeist (which is nourished by the communicated ideas of mankind) nor his 'Eternal not ourselves' (see above, p. 108) belong to this category. His view is therefore essentially that of a Christian Humanist, open-minded and tolerant towards other persuasions, humanist or otherwise. Fraser Neiman (1968) sums up Arnold's position as follows:

Rationalist though Arnold may appear to be because of his humanistic emphasis and because of the illusion of clarity that his style induces, he was equally a Transcendentalist, at least in his view of historic process. On the one hand, Arnold insisted on the superiority of Jesus, among religious teachers, to persuade men to right conduct and he insists on the responsibility of the individual to strive towards perfection; yet, on the other hand, he believes that collective human experience, seen in the long perspective of time, is itself subject to the plastic stress of a divine mind... (pp. 118-119)

On the whole, I would agree with this, adding that his 'transcendentalism' such as it is, is not a fundamental aspect of Arnold's philosophy as much as ^a vestigial remnant of Christian orthodoxy dissolved in the general evolutionary current of the time. Arnold's varied, and essentially metaphorical, expression of this concept in terms of the Zeitgeist, which has already been discussed (see p. 223 above) should be borne in mind.

Language

It would have been impossible to discuss Arnold's epistemological preoccupations without frequent reference to his views on language. Certain parallels between Arnold's and the linguistic philosopher A J Ayer's views on metaphysical and scientific language have been noted (see pp. 275-6); his conception (like Karl Popper's) of the social significance of language is observed (see p. 278); his concern that the essentially poetic, or literary language used by Jesus should be recognized as such is referred to (p. 280); and there is reference to the suggestiveness of language (pp. 272-4); and to the language of accommodation (p. 285), etc. Some discussion of his conception of the oscillation in history between language, experience and ideas was included in an earlier chapter (chapter 9, p. 230). A sound working knowledge in particular of Latin, Greek, French, German and Italian inevitably developed Arnold's sensitiveness to language. He was

aware of its varied uses; its susceptibility to change; and of the pitfalls of translation. A footnote in Literature and Dogma is typical of this recognition: 'It is to be remembered...that whereas Jesus spoke Aramaic, the most concrete and unmetaphysical of languages, he is reported in Greek, the most metaphysical' (Super VI, p.308).

His excursions into etymology are probably the least successful aspects of Literature and Dogma, but a certain precocity and over-exuberance in this area he shared with a general intellectual current of the nineteenth century when much more seemed to be provable by etymological analysis than we would nowadays admit. Etymological observations on 'man' (Super VI, p.179), 'religion' (p.176) and 'God' (pp.171 and 182), for example, are open to question in the light of further developments. Chambers (1947) observes of Arnold's definition of 'God' that 'modern philology does not bear him out here, preferring to relate the word to one or other of the two Aryan roots, one meaning 'to invoke', the other 'to pour, to offer sacrifice' (p.101), rather than to the Aryan word for 'shining' or 'brilliant'.

But the essential and most significant contribution Arnold makes in relation to language is his insistence on the difference between and yet the equal importance of scientific and literary language, as for example in his observation that 'The language of the Bible...is literary, not scientific language; language thrown out at an object of consciousness not fully grasped, which inspired emotion' (Super VI, p.189). To complement this we have its corollary in St Paul and Protestantism: 'Assertions in scientific language must stand the tests of scientific examination' (Super VI, p.9). The literary critic, I A Richards, expressed his recognition of the importance of this distinction in 1929 as a result of his researches into the relationship between intellectual (scientific) and emotional (poetic) belief. Like Arnold, he regards both kinds of understanding as important, if not always easily attainable:

The absence of intellectual belief need not cripple emotional belief, though evidently enough in some persons it may. But the habit of attaching

emotional belief only to intellectually certified ideas is strong in some people; it is encouraged by some forms of education; it is perhaps becoming through the increased prestige of science, more common. (p.278)

And in a pertinent footnote, I A Richards adds:

I have discussed this danger at length in Science and Poetry. There is reason to think that poetry has often arisen through fusion (or confusion) between the two forms of belief, the boundary between what is intellectually certified and what is not being much less sharply defined in former centuries and defined in another manner. The standard of verification used in science today is comparatively a new thing. As the scientific view of the world (including our own nature) develops, we shall probably be forced into making a division between fact and fiction that, unless we can meet it with a twofold theory of belief on the lines suggested above, would be fatal not only to poetry but to all our finer, more spiritual, responses. (pp.278-279)

More recently Paul Hirst (1966), among other educationists, influenced by Wittgenstein, and perhaps to a lesser extent by P H Phenix, asks: 'What kinds of things do we do with words? i.e. what realms of meaning are there, and How in words are these things achieved, i.e. by what uses of language are these functions fulfilled?' (p.72). In seeking to answer these questions he deplores the 'defective theory of meaning' which may result from an education overstressing the verifying and logical use of scientific language:

Insofar as education conceives itself as restricted to developing only this limited form of understanding it has succumbed to a disastrously narrow concept of its intellectual task. Certainly there is now little backing for any such restriction in contemporary philosophy, for such doctrinaire theories of meaning have given place to a great deal of steady and sober work on the distinctions in language which mark clear distinctions in its uses. That moral discourse has a function and meaning quite different from scientific discourse and that both these have a function quite distinct from that of say poetic discourse, is now generally accepted and that without derogatory comments being passed on the function of say moral, poetic or even religious discourse. (p.73)

In this and other educational works, including the influential Bullock Report (DES, 1975) (see pp.188-193) Arnold's distinctions are upheld in general, if not in particular terms, and his concern justified.

Conclusion

Not only do we find what were Arnold's particular preoccupations with language coming more to the fore, but his general eclecticism represents a mode receiving more recognition latterly. In Conflict and Change in Education (ed. Ianni, 1975), an important recent American contribution to educational thought, we find a similar concern to

Paul Hirst's expressed: 'We feel somehow trapped in our ideology which suggests that schools must primarily transmit information' writes Ianni, yet 'We know that the latter is not true' (p.465). We have to recognize that in assessing the values of society we need to be more eclectic as to our means of validation - 'the process by which we, as individuals, or in groups, decide what is and is not true, what is and is not acceptable' (p.466). Ianni then proceeds to delineate five alternative modes of 'validation'; the authoritarian mode, the logical rational mode, the empirical mode, the pragmatic mode and the consensual mode. The particular kind of validity of each of these modes is demonstrated and their interrelationship discussed in such a way as to show that, in general, we tend to adopt combinations of these validations in varying patterns and proportions depending upon the problem we are seeking to solve, or the item we are concerned to validate.

The study of Arnold's epistemology reveals an eclectic mind given to such a range of means of validation (or 'verification', as he would have said). He makes use of authorities, resorts to logic and reason, seeks for experimental or empirical proof, looks for practical or pragmatic implications and appeals to consensus as the occasion demands. He would have found much to agree with ⁱⁿ the author concerned; and would certainly have agreed with these words from his Preface:

Thus, we see the role of education not as presenting students an arsenal of ready-made solutions to any problem they encounter, but rather as preparing people to make increasingly more accurate judgments about values and the social issues they generate. (Ianni, 1975, p. (i))

This chapter began with reference to the needs of presentday education advocated by Wall, Wilson and Mead. I hope that it has been shown that Arnold's upbringing and thought make a contribution to those needs.

Wall (1959), for example, believes that modern living demands

provisional belief rather than conviction, the acceptance of the notion that 'truth' may be personal and many-sided, the dynamic tolerance of true agnosticism which accepts that doubt is an essential background to action and that conviction may be a bad master. (p.29)

He goes on to acknowledge that these are 'psychologically very difficult

attitudes to maintain' and that 'such a state of mind demands, psychologically speaking, great personal security from the individual' (p.29). Margaret Mead (1972) believed that, to meet rapid cultural change and diversity, 'the young must ask questions that we would never think to ask' and that 'we must create new models for adults who can teach their children not what to learn, but how to learn and not what they should be committed to, but the value of commitment' (p.115).

Matthew Arnold, with his confidently questioning outlook, his espousal of the openness of literary culture, his sceptical rejection of the security of dogma, and his personal moral commitment to Christian Humanism along with his imaginative tolerance of other points of view, exemplifies the temperamental qualities advocated by Mead and Wall; and a consideration of his upbringing gives some indication of how he came to develop these qualities.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

IMAGINATIVE LITERATURE IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

What is comprised under the word literature is in itself the greatest power available in education; of this power it is not too much to say that in our elementary schools at present no use is made at all.

Matthew Arnold: Reports on Elementary Schools, 1871

Literature brings the child into an encounter with language in its most complex and varied forms...It provides imaginative insight into what another person is feeling...It confronts the reader with problems similar to his own, and does it at the safety of one remove.

The Bullock Report: A Language for Life, 1975

Introductory

This chapter considers the place and value of imaginative literature in the school curriculum as a means towards the emotional and moral development of pupils. It is essentially concerned with principles, but attitudes towards classroom practice are implicit in the discussion.

Earlier chapters have raised various issues relevant to this question and it is proposed in this chapter to draw these together towards a tentative conclusion. Chapter 3 indicated the main lines of development in the teaching of literature as revealed in a series of official and unofficial reports from the Newbolt Report (1921) to the Bullock Report (1975) including in passing a dissenting voice from America (Postman, 1970) claiming that the teaching of reading was ^asemi-sinister plot to maintain the status quo of a corrupt authority. The survey ended with reference to recent proposals to develop a 'core curriculum' in United Kingdom schools. After delineating the contents and the reception of Arnold's work entitled Literature and Dogma (chapters 4 and 5), chapter 6 examined the essentially literary significance of his ironic stance. Chapter 7 broadly indicated Arnold's views on literature in general, and considered these in relation to the views of others; and chapter 10 discussed Arnold's basic epistemology, particularly as this throws light on his view of literature and its language, and their relation to morality and religion.

At this point tentative definitions of 'literature' and 'dogma'

respectively may be helpful. (For the purposes of this chapter, it should be understood, the discussion of literature will be restricted to 'imaginative literature'.) Imaginative literature, it could be said, employs the written word in an open-ended exploration of experience and invites the reader's individual response to the writer's interpretations and evaluations. Dogma on the other hand, presents an authoritative, corporate schema of concepts and values, demanding the allegiance of adherents in return for the promise of emotional security within the context of social mores it represents. It is an assumption of this chapter that human individuals need verbal guidance or nourishment in developing their value-systems and moral principles and that (apart from the people they encounter - undoubtedly the primary source) they are likely to look towards literature (and its associated arts) or towards dogmatic formulations for support.

Impossibility of proving moral efficacy of literature

It must be frankly admitted at the outset that (in the writer's view) it is impossible to prove that the use and teaching of literature in schools will improve a pupil's ethical values or moral behavior. Questionnaires can tell us what people read and enjoy (or otherwise), but not how their actions are influenced. There have been short-term studies it is true of, for example, the effectiveness of film propaganda in changing the attitude of troops preparing to engage in a war - such as the series of American films entitled Why We Fight described by Hovland, Lumsdaine and Sheffield (1949). And studies of the effects on behavior of television violence have a marginal relevance to the problem of the moral influence of verbal literature. But the long-term ethical effects of television programmes, films, or literature of an unbiased non-propagandistic type would be very difficult to evaluate with any decisive statistical accuracy. Even longitudinal studies of individuals would be beset by all kinds of problems of sampling, isolation of relevant factors, management of complex variables, etc.

Yet despite this inevitable lack of positive evidence there continues to be a commonly accepted belief that somehow or other our values, lives and behavior are influenced by literature. Otherwise it is impossible to explain the prevalence of censorship in various communities and cultures; the phenomenon of Marxist criticism; the anxieties of educationists concerned about racism or sexism in children's books; the imprisonment of writers; or the eagerness of prisoners of conscience to acquire literature to sustain their morale. It is clearly believed that literature has an effect on us - a potentiality for modifying our outlook, and so our behavior - and that reading is more than a mere aesthetic exercise. In the absence of proof that literature is a more effective means of value-acquisition than dogma it is the object of this chapter to present some arguments and evidence favouring such a view, recognizing that finally any such belief must be a matter of subjective individual judgment.

Pros and cons

Perhaps the strongest argument against the moral efficacy of literature has been voiced in recent years by George Steiner (1969) who pointed out that readers of Rilke and Shakespeare could man the gas-chambers of Dachau and Buchenwald without any sense of incongruity. Their sensibility to literature had not found issue in a comparable sensitivity to real life. Apparently intellectual-aesthetic sensitivity is not necessarily the parent of moral-emotional sensitivity or of ethical behavior. Dr Goebbels, in fact, was able to draw on his cultural background and use his considerable literary skills in the service of dogmatic Nazi propaganda. There is no escaping this. On the other hand, in the same environment, Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1967) drew upon similar resources for the necessary spiritual and emotional nourishment to work in opposition to the Nazi regime. Such contrary examples indicate the complexity and range of the problem we are concerned with. All arguments in this sphere, it would seem, presuppose a series of potential links along the following lines:

fiction → imagination → moral outlook → behavior

It would appear that in some cases, as with Bonhoeffer, the imagination is harnessed towards the final two stages, while in others, as with Dr Goebbels, it is shunted off into a siding concerned purely with aesthetic satisfaction, while nourishment for moral outlook and behavior is sought and found elsewhere.

Another modern example of an individual finding emotional nourishment through literature - this time in the writing of it - can be seen in Wole Soyinka's work Shuttle in the Crypt which arose from his experience of two years solitary confinement in prison. According to Gerald Moore (1973), his biographer, the writing of this work gave the poet 'the imaginative equipment to convey his anguish without a loss of control' (p.96). And Soyinka (1972) himself writes of the work that

Self-identification with this essence of innate repletion was a natural weapon to employ against the dangers of inhuman isolation. It was never a mere poetic conceit; all events, thoughts, dreams, incidental phenomenon were, in sheer self-protection perceived and absorbed into the loom-shuttle unity of such an experience. (p.vii)

Before reverting to Matthew Arnold's views on this issue it is interesting to consider testimonies from two of his near contemporaries, Charles Darwin and John Stuart Mill. Charles Darwin records in about 1875 how his concentration on purely scientific matters seems to have robbed him of the capacity to enjoy poetry, painting or music:

My mind seems to have become a kind of machine for grinding general laws out of large collections of facts, but why this should have caused the atrophy of that part of the brain alone, on which the higher tastes depend, I cannot conceive...The loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness and may possibly be injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character, by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature. (Klingopulos, 1964, p.55)

Darwin's designation of the arts as 'higher tastes' is interesting, as is his concern for the loss of 'happiness' he deplores in their absence. Also noteworthy is the direct relationship he assumes between emotion and moral character (along lines suggested in the model above, see p.304).

John Stuart Mill's observation that 'the habit of analysis has a tendency to wear away the feelings' had a poignant basis in the depression (described so vividly in his diary) which he suffered in his early manhood. The

Utilitarian, James Mill, his father, had provided his son with a thorough, but strictly factual, education in the belief that there was little utility in imaginative literature. On reaching manhood John Stuart Mill had a brilliant intellect but with his emotions starved life seemed utterly pointless and empty to him. He describes how, eventually, he 'took up the collection of (Wordsworth's) poems from curiosity with no expectation of mental relief from it'. The result was, however, (he writes) 'that I gradually but completely emerged from my habitual depression, and was never again subject to it' (Mill, 1873, ppl46-149).

Arnold would have explained John Stewart Mill's therapeutic experience of literature in terms of its 'positive', 'vital', 'life enhancing' qualities. Writing of Wordsworth, Arnold declares:

Wordsworth's poetry is great because of the extraordinary power with which (he) feels the joy offered to us in nature, the joy offered to us in the simple primary affections and duties; and because of the extraordinary power with which, in case after case, he shows us this joy, and renders it so as to make us share it. (see Wordsworth, Super IX, p.51)

In this explanation there is a hint of poetry's moral value (in the word 'duties'), but the emphasis is on the emotion of joy. Elsewhere Arnold brings out the ethical implications of Wordsworth's poetry more fully: '...poetry is at bottom a criticism of life;...the greatness of a poet lies in his powerful and beautiful application of ideas to life, - to the question: How to live' (ibid. p.46). Writing of Maurice de Guérin, Arnold attests that 'the power of poetry is its interpretive power, by which I mean, not a power of drawing out in black and white an explanation of the mystery of the universe, but the power of so dealing with things as to awaken in us a wonderfully full, new and intimate sense of them, and of our relations with them' (Super III, pp.12-13). Later in the same paragraph he seems to be putting his finger on the problem expressed above by Darwin:

The interpretations of science do not give us this intimate sense of objects as the interpretations of poetry give it; they appeal to a limited faculty, and not to the whole man. It is not Linnaeus or Cavendish or Cuvier who gives us the true sense of animals, or water, or plants, who seizes their secret for us, who makes us participate in their life; it is Shakespeare...Wordsworth..., Keats..., etc. (ibid.)

The reader, or appreciative critic, shares the animating excitement of the poet because 'to have the sense of creative activity is the great happiness and the great proof of being alive' (Super III, p.285). In all this Arnold's orientation is close to that of Schweitzer (~~see~~ above, p. 253); 'reverence for life' and ^asense of participation in the life around us has a reciprocal influence on the participant, since by the Golden Rule his sense and valuation of his own life are augmented.

The nature and scope of literature

So far the evidence offered has been in relation to poetry - a widely differentiated art in itself, but far from being the sum of literature, which must now be considered in its broader aspects. Wellek and Warren (1973) recognize '"fictionality", "invention", or "imagination" as the distinguishing trait of literature' (p.26). The author Russell Hoban (1979) sees stories as virtually coterminous with life:

The action systems of the universe are the elements from which life and stories arise. The patterns of blue-green algae and the numinous wings of the Great Nebula in Orion and the runic scrawl of human chromosomes are stories. Begotten by no one knows what, stories beget people to live them. We are the offspring of immeasurable ideas. (p.5)

Myths, legends, fairy tales, novels, plays and poetry all serve not only to illuminate life but to create it, or to re-create it afresh in recognizable patterns and forms. But it is essentially subjective life - the world of feeling and imagination - that they are concerned to re-create. In the words of Suzanne Langer (1964):

The primary function of art is to objectify feeling (my italics, RA) so that we can contemplate and understand it. It is the formulation of so-called "inward experience", the "inner life", that is impossible to achieve by discursive thought...Art objectifies the sentience and desire, self-consciousness and world-consciousness, emotions and moods that are generally regarded as irrational because words cannot give us clear ideas of them (pp.80-81)

All this is achieved through the use of imagination - 'probably the oldest mental trait that is typically human' (p.81).

Suzanne Langer's contention that art 'objectifies feeling' is a major argument justifying the use of imaginative literature in the educational curriculum. Considering the place that feelings occupy in our lives -

their pre-eminence in all our doings in terms of motivation, attention and response to the world around us - to ignore them, to leave them inchoate, would be an unforgivable act of neglect. Not that literature seeks to spell out analytically and discursively the nature of a feeling or emotion, defining 'trauma', 'complex', 'obsession', 'conation', etc. in generalized abstract terminology; rather it presents them to us embodied in individual characters set in situations and passing through stages of development recognizable to us as they penetrate our own dimly apprehended experience and unfold its significance to our view. 'A literary work of art', according to Wellek and Warren (1973), 'is not a simple object but rather a highly complex organization of a stratified character with multiple meanings and relationships' (p.27). Because of its multiple character each of us is able to take from it according to our own particular need of the moment. Whereas scientific language is denotative, working on a one-to-one basis of correspondence, literary language is connotative, working by ambiguity, open association and suggestion. Hence its accessibility to a variety of subjective needs. According to Suzanne Langer (1964) 'there is nothing necessarily confused or formless about emotions' (p.82) although they may lie below the level of consciousness. However,

As soon as the natural forms of subjective experience are abstracted to the point of symbolic presentation, we can use those forms to imagine feeling and understand its nature. Self-knowledge, insight into all phases of life and mind, spring from artistic imagination. That is the cognitive value of the arts. (ibid.).

When the anonymous eighteenth century moralistic author of Little Goody Two-Shoes (1765) complained that 'people stuff children's Heads with Stories of Ghosts, Fairies, Witches, and such Nonsense when they are young, and so they continue Fools all their Days' he was only half right. To believe in the objective existence of ghosts and fairies all one's days is indeed a sign of folly - an abandonment to Aberglaube, in Arnold's terms - but to ignore the subjective, psychological significance of such phenomena, and to be deprived of experience of their embodiment in

imaginative stories, myths and legends is to miss out on a huge and vital slice of life.

David (1964), in the Introduction to The Twelve ^{Dancing} Princesses and Other Fairy Tales, writes of 'the deep roots traditional stories have in the imagination', reminding us that 'Fairy Tales are not, as is commonly believed, a form of children's literature; they are, like fables, legends and ballads, among the many forms of adult literature that children have adopted' (pp.ix-x), because of their universal or archetypal significance. And Bruno Bettelheim (1978) in The Uses of Enchantment, spells out in some detail the psychological significance, and the value for mental health and growth towards emotional maturity of folk tales which at surface valuation might be dismissed as mere flights of fancy.

This is not the place for a critique of Jung's theories of 'archetypes of the collective unconscious' or of the 'persona' or 'the shadow'; but some mention of the last-named must be made in view of its relevance to both 'literature' and 'dogma'. I will quote for simplicity's sake from Freda Fordham's Introduction to Jung's Psychology (1953):

The shadow is the personal unconscious; it is all those uncivilized desires and emotions that are incompatible with social standards and our ideal personality, all that we are ashamed of, all that we do not want to know about ourselves. It follows that the narrower and more restrictive the society in which we live the larger will be our shadow... The collective aspect of the shadow is expressed as a devil, a witch or something similar...(p.50)

Authoritarian dogma-ridden or ideology-ridden societies find and define their collective shadows in terms of what is collectively repressed. Seventeenth century Salem objectified it in witchcraft, McCarthyite America in 'reds under the beds', Communist Russia in 'bourgeois capitalist decadence', and so on. This is clearly an over-simplification of a complex phenomenon, but the principle is demonstrated. In a liberal democratic society, the need for objectifying a collective shadow in this way is reduced by the increase in individual autonomy. But there is no escaping the need for autonomous individuals to recognize and come to terms with their own individual 'shadow' for maximum mental health. And literature, through its symbolic representation of various

states of mind with which we are invited to identify, is a chief means of achieving this. 'The shadow', Freda Fordham reminds us, 'cannot be touched by ordinary methods of education' (p.50). But appropriate freely accessible literature, together with help in understanding its function as pupils move towards maturity, is one means of coping with it.

Truth, fact and fiction

Initially, by the young child, of course, the story is accepted on its own terms without question. Sooner or later - usually about the lower junior school stage - the question 'Is it true?' begins to be asked. If we are to be true to our understanding of the nature of literature and fair to the emotional development of the pupils, the answer is neither a simple 'yes' or 'no'. With older children - say upper juniors - we can pose the counter question 'In what sense true?'. With younger children, for whom such a question would be confusing or meaningless, we need to tread delicately, for the area is a sensitive one. The answer we give to individual children will depend upon the context, the story in question, the intellectual and emotional maturity of the child, and so on; but it needs to be guided by recognition of two basic principles: (1) that imagination and fantasy are important to our emotional life and can embody valuable truths; (2) that such truths are not the same as empirical facts dealing with objective physical reality. In other words, we should avoid debunking or devaluing the story in any way, while at the same time helping the enquirer to sort out his world view in such a way as to be scientifically acceptable in terms of reason and probability. If the story is one which also involves religious or cultural beliefs, a third principle needs to be observed: (3) that we recognize and respect differences of opinion held by different people. A tactful answer based on these three principles should avoid doing violence to a child's domestic loyalties while at the same time helping him come to terms with the nature of story and actuality. Toleration of uncertainty and ambiguity are important things to learn, but we do not need to compound confusion

by leaving blurred edges where reasonable certainty and commonsense can clarify distinctions. And where there exists a variety of opinions it may often be fairest to state clearly, but not dogmatically, our own point of view. Upper junior children can be helped by a fuller discussion of the distinction between history, legend and myth when such questions arise.

'Is it true?' 'Did it happen?' 'Did it really happen like that?'

Each of these questions is of a different order and requires a different response. In answering them we must be guided by our sense of fact as well as by our respect for fiction; and by our recognition that both in their different ways may nourish our understanding of truth.

Tolkien (1964) believes that children are capable of "literary belief" when the story-teller's art is good enough to produce it' This concept is somewhat akin to Coleridge's 'poetic faith' (before which our 'common notions of philosophy give way' (Coleridge, 1960, v. pp.130-140); and to Matthew Arnold's 'imaginative reason' (v. pp. ²⁷⁹⁻²⁸² above). There is a sense in which the mathematician Lewis Carroll 'believed in' his creation Alice in Wonderland. (Certainly its paradoxes reflect the real world.) And the art of the historian and novelist, Anatole France, enables us to believe, with him, in the fairy that enters and interrupts the reveries of the ageing archivist, Monsieur Bonnard, in his novel Le Crime de Monsieur Bonnard. From these writers we learn that the complement to reason and logic need not be sought in magic and the supernatural - that is to say, pseudo-objective Aberglaube - but in imagination, recognized, cultivated and enjoyed as such. Imaginative literature is autonomous. It stands or falls by the integration achieved within it. In Solzhenitsyn's words (1973):

A work of art contains its verification in itself; artificial, strained concepts do not withstand the test of being turned into images; they fall to pieces, turn out to be sickly and pale, convince no one. Works which draw on truth and present it to us in live and concentrated form grip us, compellingly involve us, and no one ever...will come forth to refute them. (p. 6)*

* However the wording adopted above is quoted from: Solzhenitsyn: a pictorial record, London, The Bodley Head, 1974 (p. 70)

The psychologist W D Wall (1977) affirms the educational value of literature in this respect, comparing the 'non-linear ways of thinking and feeling' which give status to literature with the linear, logical structures of scientific thought' to which they are complementary, and equally important if we are to 'prepare people to reach...self-awareness and develop a secure identity which is truly independent and autonomous' (p.230). And Frank Whitehead (1966) in The Disappearing Dais, (a title which reflects the move in English teaching from authoritarian to autonomous) develops this concept in a passage which deserves to be quoted at length. Writing of the power of words in helping us 'to control and manipulate our environment' he continues:

No less important, however, is the power they give us to control ourselves - to bring order and coherence into the bewildering flux of wishes, impulses, and emotions which would otherwise submerge us. Here, indeed, lies the key to the supreme power of literature; it is able, through its symbolic representations, to insinuate stable forms of organisation into the feeling-aspect of our lives, and so help maintain a balanced integrity between the conflicting claims of inner and outer reality. There is a discernible continuity of function here (from nursery rhyme through Treasure Island to the tragedies of Shakespeare) which, once we have grasped it, permits us to see our work with literature as the culminating aspect of our work in English. (p.15)

Literature and enjoyment

It is frequently argued that the main function of literature is to provide enjoyment. A N Whitehead (1954), for example, in The Aims of Education, wrote half a century ago:

Mere literary knowledge is of slight importance...The facts related are nothing. Literature only exists to express and develop that imaginative world which is our life, the kingdom which is within us. It follows that the literary side of a technical education should consist in an effort to make the pupils enjoy literature. It does not matter what they know but the enjoyment is vital. (p.66).

From another angle, reference has been made to Arnold's insistence on Wordsworth's capacity to communicate joy in nature (see p.184 above); and we might cite Arnold's objection to the dulness of too many schoolbooks, recorded in his educational reports (Marvin, e.g. pp.82-83, 97-98, etc.). Malcolm Yorke (1979) has recently queried the contention that literature should be 'purely for pleasure'. He had found, on administering a survey among 283 teachers of children between nine and sixteen years old, that

of 95 possible responses to his questionnaire 'the most overwhelmingly popular objective chosen by the whole sample for all manner of ages, schools and classes was "that the pupil derive pleasure from literary works"' (p.21). Yorke fears that this attitude, too strongly held, can result in teachers becoming mere 'entertainers' in classroom literary sessions, in offering second-rate material and pandering to the urge for escapism.

Yorke is not against pleasure, but argues that 'the teacher who takes "pleasure" as his highest end and objective without grappling with its definition and consequences...is...selling the children short' (p.25). Pleasure, he argues may be an 'effect', but should not be a primary objective, since in any case, once the concept has been broken down into its various constituents - 'sensations', 'feelings', etc. 'the differences in pleasure yield in terms of kinds, quantities and qualities depends upon all the complex social, experiential, hereditary, environmental, developmental, linguistic, etc. factors which make us different people and readers' (p.22). He also fears that teachers may be loath to expose their charges to 'the unpleasures of tragedy' and to 'good' literature that is not, however, positive and optimistic, thus distorting and unbalancing their view of life. He quotes Barbara Hardy (1968) in support of this:

...We shall simply be adding to the lies Robert Laing accuses us of telling our children if we, as teachers of the humanities, as parents, and as citizens, consciously or unconsciously put a mute on the literature which is not life-enhancing but eloquent of despair, confusion, doubt, madness, anarchy. We must allow literature the whole of its eloquence, its Swift, Beckett, Sylvia Plath as well as its Shakespeare and Jane Austen. (p.14)

There is an important warning in Yorke's argument; but it would be unfortunate if it were pushed too far so that literature in schools became a kind of self-denying ordinance. Matthew Arnold distinguishes between 'pleasure' and 'joy', asserting that, 'by pleasure alone you cannot permanently bind men's spirits-to you. Truth illuminates and gives joy, and it is by the bond of joy, not of pleasure, that men's spirits are indissolubly held' (Super III, p.210). 'Pleasure' in this sense in literature would presumably stop short at little more than vicariously titillating the

senses, for example, while 'joy' would engage the whole person in an active reciprocal re-creation of the truth to life evoked by the writer. Arnold agrees with Schiller that '"The right art is that alone, which creates the highest enjoyment"' that it should '"Make men happy"' (Super I, p.2), and he observes with justice the ironic fact that 'In presence of the most tragic circumstances, represented in a work of art, the feeling of enjoyment...may still subsist; the representation of the most utter calamity, of the liveliest anguish, is not sufficient to destroy it; the more tragic the situation, the deeper becomes the enjoyment...' (ibid.). This recognition to some extent meets Barbara Hardy's challenge above. It could be added that there is a sense in which all honest literature, however 'eloquent of despair, confusion, doubt, etc.' is 'life enhancing'. If (to revert to Arnold's terms) literature is 'a criticism of life', literature which reveals its dark side is a criticism of those forces which create the darkness, and is thus asserting (by contrast) the positive values against which the darkness is judged.

I would suggest that one of the means by which grim and tragic literature gives us pleasure is by demanding from us the exercise of our 'best selves' in sympathy with the suffering characters. In identifying and suffering with, for example, Tess (in Tess of the d'Urbervilles) or Henchard (in The Mayor of Casterbridge) we are, so to speak, elevated by the quality of our suffering (perhaps of a kind and degree of which we may not have felt ourselves capable). At the same time, of course, we are protected from the direct effects of the suffering by the distancing of vicarious experience from actuality, which is another (rather more selfish) source of literary pleasure. This is the 'third ground' principle.

A further pleasure and value we derive from literature is that we can simultaneously enjoy the thrust of the assassin's dagger as we enjoy giving our sympathy to its victim. Our 'best' and 'worst' selves are thus both engaged at the same time - apparently to no ill effect. It would seem, although I suppose it could not be guaranteed, that we derive in this

way the double benefit of 'catharsis' for our worst side and moral enrichment for our best. The term 'catharsis' has been loosely used here. To discuss it fully would be to examine the way in which through literature we can achieve valuable emotional release of our unacknowledged pent-up feelings - another argument favouring an important place of literature in the school curriculum.

But to return to Malcolm Yorke's challenge respecting the place of pleasure in literature teaching. Pleasure and enjoyment would seem to me to be important constituents of a pupil's encounter with literature. However, this does not imply a demand for a constant state of euphoria in literature lessons. Pleasure, moreover, cannot exist alone; it exists only in relation to its context. If the context is regarded as the nature of the engagement between readers and the text, then the resulting pleasure could be said to be a measure of the quality of the engagement. The pleasure derived should not simply be restricted to immediate and obsolescent pleasure; and therefore the standard and quality of the literature offered cannot be ignored. In short, although enjoyment is one of the prime values to be derived from engaging with literature, it should not be regarded as the be-all-and-end-all; but as a quality without which whatever is offered risks becoming useless or counter-productive.

Moral value of literature

Matthew Arnold defined religion as 'morality touched by emotion' (see above, p.106). This could almost as well be used as a definition of a great deal of literature. Perhaps this is why Arnold comes very close at times to seeming to seek to replace religion by poetry (see pp.181-2). However, he recognizes religion to be a 'binding to life', whereas poetry he defines as a 'criticism of life', and so its treatment of morality and emotion will not be of the same order. The meaning Arnold attaches to the phrase 'criticism of life' is misconstrued by Wellek (1966) when the latter says that Arnold's conception of poetry is narrowly reduced by it to 'didactic poetry' (p.164). Arnold does mean that poetry is in some sense

'didactic' - i.e. that as a result of the particular way in which a poet brings beauty of form in relation to truth of content we are enabled to learn something; but he is certainly not referring to a didactic genre of poetry when he describes poetry as a 'criticism of life'. He simply means that literature is inevitably evaluative in its interpretation of life.

Speaking of Homer, and later of Wordsworth, Arnold affirms that 'the noble and profound application of ideas to life is the most essential part of poetic greatness' (Super IX, p.44). Praising Voltaire for 'his signal acuteness' in remarking that 'no nation has treated in poetry moral ideas with more energy and depth than the English' (ibid., p.45), Arnold continues, 'Voltaire does not mean, by "treating in poetry moral ideas", the composing moral and didactic poems; - that brings us but a very little way in poetry' (ibid., p.46). Catherine Runcie (1969), discussing some quotations from Arnold on Milton, Keats and Shakespeare, conveniently sums up her view of 'the key to what Arnold means by moral':

What is against life is not moral, he says. What is for life is moral. Moral ideas to Arnold are ideas that make for life - ideas that have vital value. These quotations from Milton, Keats and Shakespeare contain vital value; in varying degrees they contain ethical, intellectual, naturalistic and affective value. This is indeed what myth bears, what the great or noble or significant action that permanently moves us bears - vital value, value that makes for life gleaned from our original experience of existence, of being in the world. (pp.38-39)

Here again, in Runcie's accurate summary, Arnold's ideas approximate very closely to Schweitzer's (see p.253). It should be pointed out that the 'ideas' in question here are not simply abstractions, but relate to quotations from Milton, Keats and Shakespeare embodied in concrete character and situation. In this resides the power of literature as against the treatment of morals 'bound up with systems of thought and belief which have had their day' and which 'have fallen into the hands of pedants and professional dealers' (Super IX, p.46).

Karl Popper (1966) illustrates the importance of the embodiment of moral ideas in concrete literary characterization:

Whenever we are faced with a moral decision of a more abstract kind (he

writes) it is most helpful to analyse carefully the consequences which are likely to result from the alternatives between which we have to choose. For only if we can visualize these consequences in a concrete and practical way do we really know what our decision is about; otherwise we decide blindly. (p.232)

Popper then quotes a passage from Shaw's Saint Joan in which the Chaplain who 'has stubbornly demanded Joan's death' at the stake is brought to realize its significance when he witnesses the scene of her burning:

I meant no harm...(he cries out)...I did not know what it would be like... You don't know...You madden yourself with words...But when you see the thing you have done; when it is blinding your eyes, stifling your nostrils, tearing your heart, then - then - O God, take this sight from me!

As with this example from dramatic literature, so too a novel's purpose, according to Joseph Conrad, is 'to make them see; to make them hear; to make them feel'* - the moral value of which lies in the deeper felt level of understanding the reader gains from the text. Solzhenitsyn (1972) develops this idea:

Art and literature can perform the miracle of overcoming man's characteristic weakness of learning only by his own experience, so that the experience of others passes him by. Art extends each man's short time on earth by carrying from man to man the whole complexity of other men's life-long experience with all its burdens, colours, and flavours. Art recreates in the flesh all experience lived by other men, so that each man can make it his own. (p.14)

Good literature by combining complexity and variety of experience with unity and wholeness of form can give us increased tolerance of diversity within the security of aesthetic satisfaction. Moral values vary from person to person and from culture to culture. Whether or not there is an ultimate, ideal 'Morality', in practice ethical ideas are relative, disparate, idiosyncratic - a problem of increasing importance as the world shrinks, bringing diverse viewpoints into close proximity. Culture-clash and ethical uncertainty are a main concern of Alexander Solzhenitsyn (1972) when he asks:

But who will reconcile these scales of values and how? Who will create for mankind a single system of evaluation - for evil deeds and good deeds, for what is intolerable and what is tolerable, for how the line is to be drawn between them today? Who will explain to mankind what is really terrible

*Quoted by John le Carre, BBC2 Television, 25 September, 1977

and unbearable, and what only irritates our skin because it is near?... Who would be able to bring home to a bigoted and obstinate human being the distant conceptions that he himself has never experienced? Propaganda, compulsion and scientific proof are all powerless here... (p.14)

Whether a 'single system of evaluation' can ever be achieved is doubtful, and may not even be desirable. But the moral need to learn what latitude to tolerate and what evils not to tolerate is of continual pressing importance. Propaganda and dogma only exacerbate the problem. And compulsion compounds the resultant evils. Solzhenitsyn's view that literature is a wiser means to moral insight is worth consideration.

Literature in a multi-cultural society

The Green Paper Education in Schools (see pp.97-98 above) observes that: Our society is a multicultural, multi-racial one, and the curriculum should reflect a sympathetic understanding of the different cultures and races that now make up our society.' Furthermore, the Green Paper continues, 'We live in a complex interdependent world, and many of our problems in Britain require international solutions. The curriculum should therefore reflect our need to know about and understand other countries' (paragraph 10.11).

In confirmation of the multi-racial nature of at least one of our inner city populations, an Inner London Education Authority paper, Multi-Ethnic Education (1977), gives relevant statistics including the figures for 1975 of 41 per cent live births to mothers from outside the United Kingdom - 23 per cent from New Commonwealth countries and 19 per cent from the Irish Republic and other countries. Therefore of 30,300 births in Inner London that year 12,390 were to mothers of non-United Kingdom origin. This situation multiplied in a number of inner city areas, presents a challenge and an opportunity, as well as a number of problems, to our educational provision in general and in particular to the humanities field within the curriculum. Literature, as a culture-saturated phenomenon, is of obvious importance in this context.

W D Wall (1977) distinguishes three possible solutions to the problems

inevitably created by cultural diversity - (1) multiculturalism, (2) assimilation, or (3) biculturalism. He observes that

any of the solutions - (1) a multicultural society recognizing and exploiting the richness of human difference and the value of different cultures, or (2) more or less complete assimilation of individuals to the surrounding culture, or (3) the maintenance in equilibrium of the two cultures in the individual and his group - can be satisfying to the individual, and, if successful, contribute greatly to mental health. (p.200)

On the other hand, he continues, 'it has to be recognized that ethnic, linguistic and cultural differences do propose very considerably augmented difficulties of adjustment, particularly in adolescence; and that special steps have to be taken to ensure that such adjustments are made' (pp.200-201). This is a task in which schools can make a major contribution, and in which a sensitive use of literature has much to offer.

It is not the object of this thesis to seek to promote any of the three solutions indicated by W D Wall; in any case it is most likely that different situations will demand different solutions: one group will welcome an opportunity for total assimilation within the society chosen as its new home; another will wish to maintain its cultural identity in certain areas of life while adopting the host country's cultural norms in others; and in another situation it will seem appropriate for a cultural mix, members seeking unity in the shared diversity of elements offered to the whole. The task for literature in the curriculum is to help ease the way for individuals into whichever of these solutions is most appropriate.

It is probably true to say that the more complex a society becomes and the more potentially bewildering the external world seems, the more vital does self-knowledge become for the individual. To be a member of a minority group surrounded by a host of more or less suspicious neighbours and to be a member of the indigenous group feeling threatened by the presence of new and alien neighbours are different experiences, but potentially they have certain elements in common; a fear of the 'otherness' of one's neighbours; some risk of a crisis of personal and social identity; a tendency to seek for group solidarity; a readiness to

rationalize anxieties by stereotyping and to exorcise aggressive impulses by scapegoating. All or none of these characteristics may feature in specific situations, but they indicate something of the range of possibilities. The intelligence may feel baffled and the spirit dwarfed by the situations that arise, and the need in such circumstances for promoting a secure sense of identity and raising the self-confidence of individuals is clear. By its inwardness good literature can help establish self-awareness; by its honest delineation of a human being's moral complexity and diversity of motivation it can help us come to terms with our darker side, our shadow, without loss of self-respect; and by its confident exposition of paradox, irony, doubt and tentativeness it can help reduce the need for the uncritical dogmatic assertiveness that tends to accompany fear of the bewildering or the unknown. The faculty for empathy is equally important in this area.

In an editorial to English in Education, Leslie Stratta (1979) writes that 'part of...growing wise...comes in being forced to consider values and experiences from other people's worlds; and it is still literature that gives us that most powerfully' (p.2). This means developing insight through entering imaginatively and sensitively into the private worlds of other people. Alexander Solzhenitsyn believes that we should encourage this on a wide scale. It is as though by extending our imaginative range across cultural barriers we may gradually come to approach a sense of the highest common factors and the lowest common denominators shared by humanity at large regardless of local and relatively superficial idiosyncracies. Solzhenitsyn writes:

In my opinion it is within the powers of world literature in these troubled times to help humanity to comprehend its own nature in spite of what is being instilled into people's minds by biased persons and parties. World literature can transmit the concentrated experience of one land to another in such a way that we stop seeing double and being dazzled, the different scales of values coincide, and each nation can learn the true history of other nations in an accurate, condensed form, grasping it fully with that sensation of pain that comes from living an experience oneself, and as a result of that knowledge be protected from eventual error. (p.25)

Such a view is closely in tune with that of Matthew Arnold when he writes

of the spectacle of 'the collective life of humanity':

Everywhere there is connexion, everywhere there is illustration; no single event, no single literature, is adequately comprehended except in its relation to other events, to other literatures. (Super L, pp20-21)

Insularity and parochialism were anathema to Arnold who recognized even in the jingoistic ethos of Victorian England, that 'by the very nature of things, as England is not all the world, much of the best that is known and thought in the world cannot be of English growth' and therefore we need to 'dwell much on foreign thought' (Super III, pp.282-283). Only thus can the 'free spontaneous flow of consciousness' that defeats dogmatic insularity and mechanical stereotyping be developed. Arnold's own readiness to assimilate foreign thought has already been referred to (see pp.285-7) and is evident throughout his work.

There is in Arnold's writing, it must be admitted, a degree of national and cultural stereotyping asserted with a confidence well beyond what we would be prepared to acknowledge a century later. In On the Study of Celtic Literature, for example, he writes boldly of 'the characteristics which mark the English spirit, the English genius' (Super III, p.341), and he contrasts Germanic with Celtic characteristics without trepidation (ibid. pp.341-344). In Culture and Anarchy, he compares the Hebrew character with its Hellenic counterpart (Super V, chapter 4); and in Literature and Dogma similarly distinguishes the characteristic traits of Jew and Greek (Super, VI, pp.196-197). When writing in Literature and Dogma of 'the German mind' he does, to give him his due, wonder 'if one may allow oneself to speak in such a general way' (Super VI, p.158), but this doesn't stop him doing so. In such stereotyping Arnold's writing is tainted with a shortcoming of his age - a shortcoming which we have scarcely outgrown today, although its dangers are now beginning to be more fully recognized.

Arnold did recognize, however, the danger of a people allowing a sense of racial superiority to dominate their outlook when, for example, he wrote of how 'the Hebrews were perplexed and indignant when the privileged seed became unprosperous' (Super VI, p.208). A mechanical pride in

being 'the seed of Abraham' had come to replace an earlier intuition of moral truth. Arnold's cultural stereotypes, moreover, are always balanced: a profile rather than total praise or condemnation is sought, and he is scornful of the simplistic ethnological theories of Emile Burnouf which favoured the Aryan over the Semitic race. (see Super VI, pp.239-240 and Note, pp 479-480). Moreover, his awareness of the reciprocal influence of language on cultural thought and development, demonstrated in his conception of the Zeitgeist, meant that his emphasis was always on cultural characteristics rather than racial features. It was the ethos of thought of a given time which characterised a people in Arnold's discussion, and as this changed the people changed with it. That Arnold believed in the protection of minority groups within a community is borne out in Culture and Anarchy by his staunch satirical defence of the Roman Catholic minority in Birmingham against the inflammatory verbal onslaughts of Mr Murphy (Super V, pp.119-120 and 426-427).

But to revert to our own times, we need to consider in what kinds of ways literature can be employed in schools to promote the integration of minority groups in our multicultural society today. Whichever of the three patterns of integration distinguished by Wall above (see pp.318-9) is adopted there are certain specific ways in which literature can help: (1) it can provide some degree of shared cultural content; (2) it can extend the range of this content to include third world and other non-parochial literature; (3) items can be chosen to support the individual identity and self-confidence of specific minority members; and (4) literature of appropriate quality can serve to enlarge sympathies and reduce the incidence of stereotyping and prejudice. These will be considered briefly in order.

(1) The study of literature as a 'body of knowledge' - a shared culture to be transmitted from generation to generation - is often condemned as a conservative exercise leading to redundancy and irrelevance. There is something in this criticism, if the principle is carried to excess. But it would seem to be a pity to condemn a community to mutual cultural

isolation by ignoring in education at least a minimal sequence of shared nursery rhymes, folk tales, myths, legends, poems, stories and novels. The search for novelty, relevance and up-to-dateness too diligently pursued can lead to the dropping of time-honoured material which seems to retain its value and appeal regardless of changing outward circumstances. It was found by the author, for example, in some research on Radio and Television Broadcasting in School and College (Andrews, 1969), that in a class of eight-year-old children the Greek legends (in a miscellany series including many more modern tales transmitted) were the stories by far the most highly appreciated by the children (pp.22-23). (Significantly enough, the psychological truth of these stories seems to be much more readily believed in by the modern generation of teachers and pupils than does that of biblical stories where the wrong kind of 'truth' - 'historical' and 'scientific' - has too often been insisted upon.) By promoting some measure of shared culture, imaginative communication including readily understood allusion and metaphor is facilitated and a bond of belonging established.

(2) The range of our common stock of literature, however, clearly needs to be enlarged to be more representative of our expanded cultural and ethnic composition. Just as diverse Anglo-Saxon, Norse, Greek and Christian elements have enriched our culture in the past, so African, Indian and Carribean material can now play their part in extending cultural and world-consciousness. Some recent anthologies of poems and stories are beginning to take this need and challenge into account, but there is room for widening the range of class, school and public libraries along these lines. Of course there is a limit to the number of works an individual's education can cope with and a corresponding danger of dilution; but it is early to worry about limits when we have scarcely opened the gates on these new areas. The enlargement suggested here should not be confined to patently multicultural areas of the country, but should be undertaken in districts where the fact of our changing national and global identity has

only dimly been recognized, or has not yet been recognized at all.

(3) Third World literature is sometimes used in what are designated 'Black Studies' courses. Arguments against such courses include concern that they may have an isolating and alienating effect; that they encourage dissatisfaction and hostility; that they inevitably dwell on a long role of subservience and suffering under white exploitation, and so on. Arguments in their favour recognize the importance of developing a sense of identity; acknowledge a psychological need for knowing something of our roots; and stress the value of drawing attention to the many valuable contributions to music, art, science, medicine and literature etc. made by black men and women. There will be situations where, provided their strengths and weaknesses are recognized, courses in 'black studies' and 'third world literature' can make a valuable contribution to the curriculum. In other situations, their imposition could be counter-productive. Only a sensitive weighing of an individual situation can prescribe what is appropriate.

(4) Enough has already been said about the importance of literature generally as a potential enlarger of our sympathies, self-knowledge and mutual understanding. Shallow literature may simply reinforce our prejudices, or distort our sense of values; literature which is truly an imaginative criticism or 'interpretation of life' can provide us with a genuine learning experience; and 'to learn' (in the words of John Scupham (1967)):

...is to revise the stereotypes with which life, art and the formal business of education have endowed us. It is to modify the complex of assumptions and expectations, concepts and attitudes with which we confront the world; which constrains us unconsciously to hear what we want to hear and see what we want to see, and governs our interpretation of all that we...perceive...(pp.103-104).

This is a lofty aim for literature in school, but worth holding up nonetheless.

Perhaps it goes without saying that the enlargement of literary range suggested in this section needs to be reflected in the examination syllabuses,

for example for 'O' and 'A' General Certificates in Education and the Certificate in Secondary Education, as long as these examinations continue to have the all-pervasive influence on the curriculum that they now have. The question whether syllabuses should be governed by examinations must be left aside for the time being; but while this tendency exists, changes of content will not occur unless incorporated in such machinery.

Literary standards: selection of material

Reference has already been made from time to time to the importance of using literature of good quality in the classroom, in line with Arnold's insistence on 'the best that has been thought and said in the world'. For since literature is concerned with life-experience and self-knowledge it would seem to be important (1) that 'good' literature should be made available - that is, literature dealing with significant experience in a valid way; and (2) that children should be helped and encouraged to evaluate critically the literature they encounter.

There is no reason to assume that the values and quality of writing of a 'children's book' should be inherently different from those applicable to adult literature. C S Lewis, a notable scholar and writer of children's books, was 'inclined to set it up as a canon that a children's story which is enjoyed only by children is a bad children's book' and Margaret Spencer (1971) writing of 'the increased interest in and criticism of imaginative fiction for children' asserts that 'children's books differ from adult books in degree rather than in kind, that good authors of books for children are informed by the same concerns as writers of adult literature but that they take the matter of childhood as their theme.' (p.133) For these reasons virtually the same canons of judgment can be applied in selecting material.

This emphasis on quality, however, must not be regarded as a plea for censorship. There is a considerable difference between prescribing desirable texts and proscribing alien material. Arnold inveighs harshly against reading material of which he disapproves, but I cannot find in his writing

any support for the principle of censorship. The notion of seeking to control men's minds by censorship is a kind of negative dogmatism, and runs counter to the principle of critical eclecticism which demands variety for the formation of comparative standards.

However, the powerful suggestiveness of imaginative literature places a responsibility on the teacher for selecting material which will nourish adequately the minds of his pupils. Arnold's concern for literature that would have a humanising influence meant that he was often disappointed in the single 'reading book' with which the schoolchild of his day was presented:

If...his reading book, as is...too often the case, presents him with bad literature instead of good -with the writing of second or third-rate authors, feeble, incorrect, and colourless - he has not, as the rich have, the corrective of an abundance of good literature to counteract the bad effect of trivial and ill-written school-books; the second or third-rate literature of his school-book remains for him his sole, or, at least, his principal literary standard. (Marvin, 1908)

Such material can 'actually spoil his taste' whereas better chosen material would 'afford the best chance of inspiring quick scholars with a real love of reading and literature...by animating and moving them' (ibid. p.83).

Where there is time enough and scope, the biblical adage 'Prove all things, hold fast that which is good' would be Arnold's principle; but within the limits of schooltime, provision of 'that which is good' becomes a priority. While we can tolerate and forgive rubbish, as a means of developing comparative standards, there is no need to disseminate it. We need to provide worthwhile material for our groups and classes, while being prepared to discuss 'all things' which individuals in their own reading may be 'proving' - testing out - in order to help them in their understanding and self-discovery.

A perennial problem facing society, and hence social education, is how to maintain a high level of aspiration, combined with a liberal degree of tolerance for those whose circumstances for various reasons force them to fall short of such aspirations. It seems, however, that the degree of tolerance society allows is a function of the level of its aspirations. Judgment of others correlates highly with the range of approbation and

disapprobation accorded to ourselves. Either the aspirations get pegged too high, as for example in Victorian England, leading to the kinds of tragedies symbolized in Hardy's Tess of the D'Urbervilles and Jude the Obscure, etc. or the level of tolerance drags the general level of aspiration down with it, leading to the wide acceptance and currency of jejune 'candy-floss' literature (see Hoggart, 1959) with its accompanying debased standards and values. There seems to be no easy solution to this problem. Since however, it is closely linked with commercial supply and demand, schools (as consumers) can help to promote the demand, and thus the supply of more, rather than less, worthwhile literature. The Newsom Report (1964) echoes views Arnold expressed on this issue of standards: 'All pupils, including those of very limited attainments, need the civilising experience of contact with great literature and can respond to its universality'. However, the Report continues, 'they will depend heavily on the skill of the teacher as an interpreter'. Such literature 'sympathetically presented...can stretch the minds and imaginations of the pupils and help to illumine for them, in wider human terms, their own problems of living.' (para.473, p.155).

Criticism and experience of literature

Allied to the critical selection of worthwhile literary material for use in schools is the cultivation of critical insight in the pupils themselves. Literature, to justify its existence, demands to be experienced, imaginatively apprehended; it also requires to be judged. How to maintain a fruitful balance between these two aspects in schools is a major task testing the teacher's sensitivity to both text and pupils.

Part of this problem is well illustrated by R H Thouless (1951), discussing the teacher's task in extending the range of his pupils' aesthetic appreciation:

He cannot do so by explaining a system of rules which will enable his pupils to distinguish good art from bad. There are probably no rules which can cover the essential uniqueness of an original work of art. If there were, the learning of them might create art critics but not art appreciators. No one who had the task of teaching humour to a class would think he had

achieved his objective if, on hearing a joke, they correctly but unsmilingly stated whether it was a good or a bad joke by seeing whether or not it conformed to the rules of humour. There is no better reason for supposing that a parallel method will bring a class nearer to appreciating poetry... (p.402)

Thouless points out that intellectual curiosity, however, can develop out of appreciation, and that appreciation can be nurtured by contact with the teacher's own 'real appreciation of poetry' and enthusiasm for it.

Jerome Bruner (1963) similarly recognizes the delicacy and subtlety of the process involved in the transmission of critical appreciation, referring to the 'intuitive confidence' needed 'in the absence of specific and agreed-upon criteria.' It is difficult (he writes) for a teacher

to make explicit provision for the cultivation of courage in taste. As likely as not, courageous taste rests upon confidence in one's own intuitions about what is moving, what is beautiful, what is tawdry. In a culture such as ours, where there is so much pressure toward uniformity of taste in our mass media of communication, so much fear of idiosyncratic style, indeed a certain suspicion of the idea of style altogether, it becomes the more important to nurture confident intuition in the realm of literature and the arts. Yet one finds a virtual vacuum of research on this topic in educational literature. (p.67)

The research gap here is not surprising. What statistical tools exist for the measurement of intuitive appreciation and judgment? Any such devices would surely be a contradiction in terms. Nevertheless there are ways of helping the learner to develop techniques of literary judgment.

Robson (1965) holds, for example, 'that it is possible, ideally, to separate the critic's tasks of description and interpretation from his task of evaluation':

that is, I believe (he writes) that the descriptive judgment typified by "There is a character in Hamlet called Osric", the interpretive judgment typified by "Hamlet is the tragedy of a man who could not make up his mind", and the evaluative judgment typified by "Hamlet is most certainly an artistic failure", are logically different. (p.28)

Robson believes that none of these judgments entails either of the others: they are independent. I A Richards (1964) believed that if we first distinguish and assess the 'sense', the 'feeling', the 'tone' and the 'intention' of a poem, its final evaluation is facilitated. Wellek and Warren (1973) observe that a just critical evaluation of a novel depends on our first being able to enter the novelist's world, for 'the great novelists all

have such a world - recognizable as overlapping the empirical world but distinct in its self-coherent intelligibility' (p.214). In assessing its truth to life we look for an artistic, not a factual correspondence:

This world or Kosmos of a novelist - this pattern or structure or organism which includes plot, characters, setting, world-view, 'tone' - is what we must scrutinize when we attempt to compare a novel with life or to judge, ethically or socially, a novelist's work. The truth to life or 'reality', is no more to be judged by the factual accuracy of this or that detail than the moral judgment is to be passed, as Boston censors pass it, on whether specific sexual or blasphemous words occur within the novel. (p.214)

This fictional, artistic world of a novel is likely to make more 'sense', by its compact organization, than the sprawling world of actuality it symbolizes. We judge its truth by its mature comprehensiveness, catholicity and inclusiveness of the 'hierarchy of elements' we find in the real world we inhabit.

Whether we adopt the approaches advocated by Robson, Richards, or Wellek and Warren, there are always two aspects of literary criticism which cut right across the principles indicated so far: these can be designated the 'mechanical' and the 'moral' assessment of a literary text. The mechanical analysis takes account of technique - rhyme, rhythm, metaphor, symbol, etc. - at the tactical level; and of forms such as the sonnet, epic, novel, tragedy, etc. at the strategic level. The moral assessment of a literary work is concerned to evaluate its 'truth' in relation to 'fact' and 'reality', and seeks to distinguish legend, myth and various kinds of fictionality from history and actuality. Criticism can be a dull and arid study; but it has a vital function in helping readers understand the relation between literature and life and to recognise the technical filter being used to convert life into art. For example, the concept irony must be grasped to appreciate Swift's A Modest Proposal or Gulliver's Travels or much of Sassoon's war poetry. Siltote's The Londininess of the Long-Distance Runner cannot be properly understood without an appreciation of the device of a persona, adopting a frame of reference which is not necessarily that of the author. Blake's 'A Poison Tree' depends upon understanding symbolism, and so on. It is as though life is translated, encoded

into art, and criticism requires a knowledge of the special language of literature, its technical codes, in order to re-interpret and understand the nature of the truths embodied in the text. Literary criticism understood in this way in schools helps to keep alive the recognition of the relevance of poetry, novels and drama to the actual lives of the pupils concerned, and to elicit from the pupils a genuine felt response.

The importance of the child's response is recognized by Jean Blunt (1979):

The research done by others and my own findings in the classroom suggest that the full and satisfying response to reading fiction has several requirements. Readers need to come willingly to fiction; understand the intricacies of the plot; empathize with the characters of the novel; evaluate the actions of the characters; and, finally to come nearer to the maturing response, they should try to verbalize opinions on the whole work and recognize something of the author's technique. (p.26)

Blunt's concern is to find ways 'to assist literary judgment without stifling the direct response'. The empathy involved in a direct response is well brought out in some comments from young readers quoted by Gill Frith (1979) in the same issue of English in Education. 'I liked the book because it was exciting,' writes an eleven-year-old reader of Five Go Camping, 'While I was reading it I imagined that I was in it and my friends were in it. And that my mum's friend who has a farm was the farmer's wife and...I imagined that I was George...(etc)' (p.30). A seventeen-year-old 'A' level English reader has a more complex response, but the empathy is still apparent:

As I read a book my imagination pictures the scenes of the book as if I was actually there and the people in the book I really know. Even as far as the people are myself but somehow I am always looking at the people even if I know their feelings as well as mine own. It seems as if I am somehow detached but my feelings are very much involved in the book and... I have to concentrate in order to stand aside. (p.31)

A third reader (a third-year secondary modern girl) quoted in a companion article by Geoff Fox (1979) observes that 'It's as if I'm ^a sort of dark watcher, who is there at the scene, but none of the characters pays any attention to me. I'm like a power, as if everything is happening because I'm there.' Fox justly comments that this child's experience of novels 'draws out both the passive and active characteristics of an absorbed reader' (p.32). Her sensitive observation bears out, in relation to

literature, Piaget's dictum: 'To know an object is to act upon it and transform it' (quoted by Ing, 1978, p.31). It is clear that this child is acting on the text in an imaginative way, creating for herself an experience from the words provided on the page. Activity in relation to literature is, therefore, not necessarily overtly critical to be valid and worthwhile. The first call upon a book or poem is for imaginative engagement. Only if this is first achieved does subsequent criticism become truly meaningful. Perhaps this accounts for the apparently counter-productiveness of much poetry teaching in schools evidenced in the Bullock Report (see above, p.89).

Examinations and literary experience

Matthew Arnold's comments on the ill-effects of the Revised Code are perhaps equally applicable to much that now takes place in the name of G.C.E. 'O' level and 'A' level English Literature examinations, and even many C.S.E. courses, initially designed to counteract such ill-effects. 'To take the commonest instance', Arnold writes in connection with the Revised Code in his Report for 1869 (Marvin, 1908), 'a book is selected at the beginning of the year for the children of a certain standard; all the year the children read this book over and over again, and no other...The circle of the children's reading has thus been narrowed and impoverished all the year for the sake of a result at the end of it, and the result is an illusion' (p.126). True today's literature students in schools study more than one book in their preparation for examinations, but concentration on the 'result' tends to warp the treatment of the texts from genuine engagement and literary experience towards rote-learning and stock answers.

'Certainly', Arnold acknowledges in the same report, 'if a man wants a certificate, or a diploma, or honours, of you, you must fix just what he shall get them for, which is by no means of the same extent as a liberal education' (p.134):

But this is a reason against making an excessive use of such test examinations, of turning too much of a man's reading into reading for certifi-

icates, diplomas and honours.

...To make a narrowing system of test examinations govern the whole inspection of our primary schools, when we have before us, not individuals wanting a diploma from us but organisations wanting to be guided by us into the best ways of learning and teaching, seems like saddling ourselves with a confessed cause of imperfection unnecessarily. (p.134)

Again in a letter to the Editor of the Pall Mall Gazette (October 5, 1870)

Arnold wrote: 'We are suffering from an excessive development of the competitive system...Education, instead of consisting in a careful and systematic development of the faculties, is in danger of reducing itself to preparing children for a series of spasmodic efforts...(and)...the whole theory of education becomes disturbed' (Super VI, pp.412-416).

He writes of examinations as 'mental gymnastics' and training selected youths in 'the art of catching marks' when the tutor or schoolmaster should 'be strongly induced to work up the whole of his pupils to a definite standard' (pp.413-414). Examinations, in Arnold's view substitute 'machinery' for human judgment:

One ingenious argument is that we cannot trust our officials to appoint their subordinates on the faith of their own judgment, and therefore we insist on their appointing them by machinery. No machinery, whether competitive examination or anything else, will ever equal the tact and discretion of a good observer. (p.415)

(Arnold does not, however, deal with the problem of assessing and appointing a 'good observer'!) Finally Arnold laments that 'it will probably take a long time before these considerations can be made intelligible to the public, who applaud every extension of the competitive principle; but it is as well to try to keep them more or less in view in hopes of a return to common sense' (p.416).

A century's development since Arnold's letter to the Pall Mall Gazette has increased rather than decreased the encroachment of examinations on the educational curriculum, putting farther off than ever what he would have regarded as 'a return to common sense'. The problem for teachers of literature in schools today is to maintain the status of their subject-matter without sacrificing the uniqueness of the experience it embodies and the spontaneity of an engaged response from the pupils, to the machinery of competitive examinations. Fortunately stories and poetry in

the primary school are still relatively safe; it is in the upper forms of the secondary school in particular that vigilance is necessary if the integrity of literary experience is to be safeguarded. It may be that the establishment of the proposed 'core curriculum' can help - particularly if the Inspectorate remember their question - 'How can a school ensure that preparation for examinations does not stunt the development of qualities of curiosity, inventiveness and imagination?' (DES, 1977, p.11) in planning its implementation. Their recognition of the importance of 'the contribution of the curriculum to the moral, ethical and spiritual areas of experience' (ibid.), is encouraging, as is their concern to 'encourage flexibility'. This chapter has sought to suggest that imaginative literature has a prime role to play in these two important respects.

CHAPTER TWELVE

CONCLUSION

The word evaluation is one of the most difficult concepts in the whole of curriculum studies...in educational settings the 'process' is as important as - or more important than - the 'product'.

Denis Lawton (1978)

The individual mind that thinks for itself will, in the course of its development, provide its own intellectual content, drawing on its environment at will. As for...minds that are not prepared to provide for themselves, what serves for content is, to a large extent, ready-made ideology or the assorted products of ideological thinking...If all men...should surrender their minds to one or another of the rival ideologies that contend for dominance, mankind's most precious qualities would be lost, its most hopeful possibilities would be foreclosed, and perhaps this earth would become a stage on which mindless hordes tore each other to pieces in the name of unquestionable truth.

Louis J Halle: The Ideological Imagination (1972)

I do hope that what influence I have may be of use in the troubled times which I see before us as a healing and reconciling influence...

Matthew Arnold (in a letter to his mother, June 1870)

The foregoing chapters have been an endeavour to explore four concepts: literature, dogma, Zeitgeist and Weltanschauung; to examine what contributions can be found in Matthew Arnold's writing to clarify and enlarge our understanding of these concepts and their relationships; and to consider their relevance to certain principles which need to be taken into account in curriculum construction.. The present chapter will endeavour to summarize the main lines of what has gone before; to draw certain tentative conclusions in relation to the questions posed in the Introduction; and to raise a number of associated issues which have bearing on curriculum construction and orientation.

In seeking to evaluate the importance of imaginative literature in the school curriculum we are faced with a double difficulty. In the first place literature itself is an evaluative (or to use Arnold's term an 'interpretive') medium where the quality of its own manifold evaluations (its varied 'criticisms of life') must be taken into account in its assessment; and secondly because it is a subject where, above all, 'the "process" is...more important than the "product"' (Lawton, 1978, p.177). In fact there is no discernible product, except perhaps for the enjoyment sometimes

evident as a result of pupils' encounters with literature, or occasional evidence of a sharpened response to its significance in subsequent discussion. However, the attempt must be made to evaluate the place of literature in the curriculum, and to consider something of its relation to dogma (and its successor 'ideology'), to religious and moral education, and to science.

Part One of this thesis sought to survey certain relevant aspects of previous research on Arnold and to examine developments in moral and religious education and in the teaching of English literature which have a bearing on the acquisition of values. A number of significant features of the current scene emerge from the brief survey given. Firstly, that the past century has witnessed in Western society at large and notably in education, religion and ethics, a general movement from reliance on authority toward individual autonomy. Secondly, that despite the steady secularization of society, there remains among many young people a concern for spiritual understanding, and an interest in 'ultimate' things and the 'numinous'. Thirdly, there is also among young people an urgent concern to explore problems of relationships, personal identity and so on. Fourthly, that religious education has, so far, largely failed to meet these needs; and moral education, still in its infancy, may not be able or willing to meet all of them. And fifthly, that the study of literature for examinations (as evidenced by the Bullock Report's observations on 'O' and 'A' level examination courses, DES, 1975, p.135) scarcely seems to encourage enjoyment of literature, since relatively few candidates say they want to read more poetry, for example, after the conclusion of their examinations.

In Part Two of this thesis the focus has been on a particular work - Matthew Arnold's Literature and Dogma - examining its content, describing its reception and analysing the implications of its ironic tenor. It was suggested that Arnold's use of irony was an intrinsic aspect of his modernity and of his 'open' literary orientation. He was seeking to

overcome and reconcile the clash of the new scientific values with the traditional values of the Christian religion. His irenic aim was to salvage the spiritual and ethical dimensions of Christianity from the vulnerable edifice of theological dogma in which miraculous, prophetic and speculative elements were blanching and withering under the intensifying searchlight of the principle of scientific verification. And his means of seeking a reappraisal of Christianity was to press for the recognition of the essentially poetic nature of scriptural writings.

In Part Three the concepts 'literature', 'dogma' and 'Zeitgeist' were considered in turn, and Arnold's view broadly approved - that the movement of the Zeitgeist with its constantly accelerating change in our intellectual environment makes the maintenance of dogma untenable as a means of value-acquisition and a guide to conduct. The social and political effects of enforced dogmatic systems and ideologies were subjected to criticism; and the inwardness, 'openness' and autonomy of literature recommended as a humanizing agent more in tune with an open scientific cultural ethos and a pluralistic society. Arnold's concern that education should include the full 'circle of knowledge' (i.e. science as well as literature) was supported, and over-specialization, resulting in 'two cultures' (or more) condemned. The cross-fertilization of disciplines can be healthy, it was suggested, provided that the differences in the language used in science, religion and literature are recognized. Thus theology and religious education need not fear a prevailing spirit of verifying science; and science loses nothing by recognizing its shortcomings in the spiritual sphere, and yielding questions of its application to moral and ethical considerations. Part Three concluded, however, with some criticism of Arnold's over-optimistic Weltanschauung in the light of subsequent developments, and favoured the more existentialist approach advocated by Albert Schweitzer.

Part Four began by considering Arnold as an educational product before examining certain aspects of his epistemological orientation. It

was suggested that his unusual flexibility and openness of mind coupled with the self-confidence to resist prepackaged thinking from all sides was the result of an upbringing which combined a high degree of emotional security with encouragement to ask questions without fear of the consequences. And it was further suggested that this type of personality (which matches certain recently established psychological paradigms) is particularly suited to meet the tensions and changes inevitable in our modern environment. The educational significance of this was considered, as were the implications of Arnold's stress on self-knowledge, tolerance and eclecticism; his distrust of system-makers; and his intuitive and practical understanding of the strengths and dangers of suggestion. Chapter Eleven focused on the place and value of imaginative literature in the school curriculum, recognising that it is impossible to prove its moral efficacy, but examining some of the arguments and evidence for recommending its secure embodiment in any core curriculum which may be established, preferably in a form relatively unshackled by the inhibiting influence of examinations. In a contracting 'multitudinous' world, and a multicultural society, it would seem that imaginative literature has much to offer as a means of ordering emotions, conveying values, enhancing our capacity for empathy, and communicating insights, both universal and culturally determined.

It now remains to advance a little further along some of the lines indicated in the foregoing summary. Qualifications need to be made in certain areas; and in others certain further implications need to be indicated.

Literature versus dogma

It may be helpful to summarize here some of the arguments for and against dogmatic and literary value-transmission respectively, lest it be thought that dogma has not been given a fair hearing.

In favour of the authoritarian establishment of dogmatic or ideological beliefs, we can enumerate among other things: (1) the sustaining

value of a widely-held dogma, which provides a temporary or permanent resting place for the emotions and intellect of an individual adherent;

(2) since 'ultimate truth' and future prognostications can never be certainly known, dogmas could be said to provide as good a framework of reference for the intellect as any other (or better than the total absence of framework with which a freethinking individual may have to cope);

(3) such an intellectual framework can free the individual to find emotional security and the necessary motivation for purposeful action;

(4) the adolescent, in particular, seeking personal autonomy and independence from family constraints may find religious or Marxist dogmas a valuable support for his developing self-construct whether or not such a support is later to be discarded; and (5) dogmatic adherence is indicative of individual humility and respect for the strength of socially approved doctrines.

In addition the holder of dogmatic beliefs is free to reject the use of literary culture as a means of value acquisition on a number of grounds. For example; (1) evidence of the ineffectiveness of imaginative literature to affect the springs of conduct of (for example) a well-read Nazi concentration camp guard; (2) the poor quality of the bulk of published literature which the average reader is likely to attend to; (3) the negative effects of frequent poor teaching, or the cramping effects of the examination of literature; or (4) the liability of individual reading to lead to anti-social and non-conformist ideas.

W D Wall (1959) has written of the magnetic pull of dogmatic thinking for many individuals in the following terms:

Doubt is threatening - conviction measuring; and the conviction shared by a group all subscribing to the same views provides a refuge for the individual, who will, with relief, relinquish the liberty of doubt and tolerance for that freedom from anxiety which conformity and its pre-ordained problems of behavior and attitude will give (p.29)

And John Hicks (1970) has spoken of theological dogmas as 'attempts to understand the meaning of (the experience of contact with divine reality)... and to relate it to other aspects of our experience.' However, as Hicks continues, 'The various concepts and thought-patterns used in these attempts are part of the ever flowing and changing stream of human culture.'

Concepts are born and flourish and die; patterns of thought form and develop but can also fall into disuse and decay. So the interpretive ideas used in theology cannot be permanent or sacrosanct...' They must, therefore, being subject to the Zeitgeist, be rethought and restated for each new generation. Such reinterpreted doctrines can provide for those young people whom Wall describes as 'hungry for faith' an authority 'external to themselves, against which to rebel mildly and in submission to which they may find security, tranquility, and peace from the need to make difficult decisions' (p.29).

However, the arguments against adherence to dogmatic authority are in W D Wall's view, and of course Arnold's (and mine) more compelling than those favouring it. For example: (1) the temporary resting places of dogmatic or ideological speculation may outlive their credibility and usefulness as changing times and circumstances bring changing frameworks of thought; (2) a schizophrenic situation may thus arise for individuals where their religious or political beliefs, for example, are incompatible with their 'scientific' beliefs; (3) adherents of 'old' and 'new' ways of thought may split into rival camps creating 'two cultures', working at loggerheads; (4) different dogmatic systems may be brought together by new cultural contacts, causing dogmatic beliefs to collide headlong, with consequent loss of faith and of the motivation and the framework for living which has previously sustained individual adherents; (5) systematic dogma which demands allegiance is more vulnerable to social and political change than are 'principles' or 'ideals' which simply invite our free response. It is not proposed to repeat here all the arguments favouring literature as a means of value-acquisition (for which see chapters 7 and 11); but among the more prominent are: (1) the autonomous nature of fiction (i.e. the freedom of literature to explore important psychological 'truths' without being bound by 'facts'); (2) the autonomy of the reader (i.e. his freedom to engage emotionally with the writer's imaginative creation without being obliged to give intellectual assent to

its details); (3) the consequent emotional value of literature, both as a means of catharsis and as value-sustaining material; (4) the suggestive power of values implicitly embodied in concrete representations rather than being presented as explicit didacticism; and (5) the fact that literature tends to engender the interest needed to sustain our willing attention to it.

Finally, it could be said that both literature and dogma are concerned with knowledge unattainable by empirical methods; but whereas dogma attempts to systemize external 'mysteries', literature seeks to make concrete by symbolism something of the mysterious functioning of the inner world we all to some extent share. Dogma seeks to provide or construct knowledge of (essentially unknowable) external 'otherness'; literature provides the means and opportunity for exploring and shaping our inner reality (as we identify with or react away from this or that character or idea), thus promoting and nourishing the self-knowledge upon which the development of personal autonomy and emotional security depend.

Irony, literature and world-view

Arnold's ironic approach to Literature and Dogma reflects, it has been suggested an early response to changes in our world-view which have subsequently become intensified. These changes seem basically to result from the fact that science, having rudely invaded the mysteries formerly guarded by theologians, has created in their place more pregnant mysteries of its own, and indeed proudly asserts its own tentativeness and incompleteness. As Eugene d'Ors expresses it: 'Science is irony: science is in a sense aesthetic like art. At every point of its progress, science accepts, implicitly, notes in its own margin, the possibility of contradiction, the progress to come. It defines, it cannot dogmatize' (see Muecke, 1969, p.129). This ironic element inherent in the unprecedented movement of the Zeitgeist as we now experience it, is inevitably reflected in other spheres. In literature, for example, as Lukács (1971) observes, 'Irony with intuitive double vision, can see where God is to be found in a world abandoned

by God...When it speaks of the adventures of errant souls in an essential, empty reality, it intuitively speaks of past gods and gods that are to come.' (Abandoned by the god 'out there', the external god of dogma, the 'errant soul' of the searching individual, looks inward and forward for a more secure God at the base of its own operations - a point at which at least some of the ideas of Arnold, Schweitzer and John Robinson converge). That this sense of irony, combined with a search for new, more inward, directions is now deep-seated in our culture is evident from the report of the Methodist Conference Commission on Education, Christian Commitment in Education (1970), quoted in chapter 2 (above, see pp.71-72). Recognizing the need for more 'open-ended conditions of debate', the report spoke of the desirability for the introduction of 'some element of satire or irony...to prick any incipient self-inflation', regarding such an approach as 'the best hope of future moral growth in a society without agreed values.' This is an extraordinary development within the sphere of religious faith and religious education, not only risking the non-conformity of adherents, but clearly designed to challenge the principle of uncritical conformity altogether.

The challenge of irony and humour to conformity is equally relevant whether we are discussing traditional theology or new ideologies. For example, Ninian Smart (1974) writes of the time when as a youth he was studying Chinese at the School of Oriental and African Studies: 'In those days I was a kind of Marxist, but (my tutor) correctly predicted that my sense of humour would ruin my ideological conformity' (pp.7-8). Muecke (1969) distinguishes between the founders of new ways of thinking and their less adventurous followers: 'The theories of Marx and Freud (he writes) encouraged relativistic thinking and are therefore compatible with the openness of irony. But communism and psychoanalysis when rigidified into dogmas and systems cannot tolerate irony any more than a bishop can' (pp.246-7).

Arnold's concern 'to see life clearly and to see it whole' brought him into opposition, as we have seen, with both the bishops and the new scientists

and the utilitarians. A further observation of Muecke (1969) is pertinent to Arnold's endeavours: 'The business of irony is to see clearly and to ask questions. Its victims are the blind; its enemies are those who do not wish to be pressed for answers. Irony (he continues) mobile and disengaged, has always been an object of suspicion in the eyes of established authority and those who feel a need for its blessing' (p.246). Some further observations of Muecke indicate that Arnold's outlook is (in Muecke's terms at least) typical of the modern General Ironist, for 'the "openness" of General Irony, the General Ironist's distrust of systems, his acceptance of impermanence as normal, (and) his ability to see "that it might just as well have happened the other way round,"' (p.127) are all features of Arnold's approach. Muecke regards 'the change-over from a "closed" to an "open ideology" as 'a crucial chapter in the history of European thought' as well as 'of central importance in the history of ideas' (p.127). If Muecke is correct, Arnold is an early representative of a major development in our European world-view, and as such (if for no other reasons) would warrant our interest.

There are, it must be recognized, degrees of irony from mild scepticism to bitter cynicism. The scepticism discussed by Muecke and evidenced in Arnold's writing, seems to be a healthy defence against dogmatic rigidity; but a conviction of the total disparity and irrelevance of things which erupts into cynicism is an unhealthy phenomenon, and can become the backdoor entrance to totalitarianism.

The main argument favouring a moderate ironic stance seems to me to be from the standpoint of economy. Change is inevitable, and in many respects ^{desirable} but the impatient revolutionary appetite for change assumes that change can only be brought about by opposition: the necessary dialectic must inevitably take place between opposing individuals and groups. The result of this - the 'dissidence of dissent' abhorred by Arnold - is much waste of human energy. An eclectic approach to problems and situations allows the dialectic to take place within the individual who is prepared to

assimilate disparities and reorganize his thinking accordingly. This is the essence of irony. The school curriculum which reflects disparities and incongruities without rancour, within and between its subject areas, is helping its pupils to develop that dispassionate sense of irony, that flexible 'spontaneity of consciousness' and concerned objectivity which is more and more necessary to cope with the clashes and collisions of our 'multitudinous' complex and contracting world.

Literature and dogma across the curriculum

Although space will not allow the full development of this theme, it seems appropriate to point out that in the teaching of various subject areas of the curriculum there exist alternative attitudes and approaches, which can reasonably be characterized as 'literary' or 'dogmatic' in essence. The existence both of an 'open' approach involving imaginative, personal reflection, and a 'closed' approach based upon didactic authoritarian principles is obvious in the teaching of religious and moral education, perhaps, but less evident in certain other subject areas. Two additional examples from the school curriculum, therefore, will be briefly considered to illustrate the principle. I have selected science and history as being closely bound up with the concepts of Zeitgeist and Weltanschauung, two important themes of this thesis. Clearly it is only possible to raise the issues here, not to pursue them in depth (which would require another thesis).

(i) Science

To begin at a relatively superficial level, it is of course possible to point to the use of scientific data as dogma on the one hand and the literary expression of scientific thought on the other. As an example of the first, Kenneth Walker (1950) points out how Darwinian doctrines were soon converted to dogmas after the appearance of The Origin of Species:

new meanings were read into it and new confirmations for old prejudices were extracted from it. Like the Bible (it) provided texts by which almost any line of thought could be justified with the help of the necessary

adjustments. In Germany the doctrine of the survival of the strong and the elimination of the weak was used to support the views of the Prussian Junkers...The glorification of warfare expounded by Treitschke and Bernhardt was amongst the fruits of this Prussian version of Darwinism. In England...the idea of evolution by natural selection provided excellent support for ruthless commercial competition and for a total disregard of the welfare of the sweated workers in England's fine new factories... (p.53)

and so on. D J Foskett (1964) provides examples of the second phenomenon - the poetic expression of scientific ideas - culled from the writings of Thomas Huxley and Alfred North Whitehead among others (see, e.g. pp.232-233 of Science Humanism and Libraries).

But my concern here is with the deeper issue of science as initiation as opposed to science as discovery raised by David Layton in Science for the People (1973) when he writes that

it is difficult to see how both objectives, i.e. an understanding of the mature concepts and theories of science and an understanding of the processes by which scientific knowledge grows, can be achieved simultaneously. The former involves the initiation of the learner into a developed conceptual system and his task is to come to terms with an established and largely uncontroversial body of knowledge. (p.176)

In other words, science in the school curriculum can scarcely be concerned with scientific 'process' until a pupil is securely acquainted with the scientific 'products' of the past epitomised in text-books, for 'at the school level, the return to original sources is clearly impossible on the scale required and the acquisition of scientific knowledge is inescapably tinged with dogmatism' (ibid.). The main protagonists of two fundamentally opposed points of view in this area are Karl Popper (1959) and Thomas Kuhn (1970), the latter advocating a relatively 'closed' approach and the former opting for 'openness'.

In Kuhn's view scientific progress is dependent upon the initiation of each new generation of scientists into rigidly conceived 'conceptual boxes supplied by professional education' (p.5). Such an education 'both rigorous and rigid' will 'come to exert a deep hold on the scientific mind' (ibid.), facilitating the exercise of 'normal science'. At the basis of Kuhn's thesis is the concept of what he terms 'paradigms' - 'universally recognized scientific achievements that for a time provide model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners' (p.viii):

The study of paradigms, (he writes),...is what mainly prepares the student for membership in the particular scientific community with which he will later practice. Because he there joins men who learned the bases of their field from the same concrete models, his subsequent practice will seldom evoke overt disagreement over fundamentals. Men whose research is based on shared paradigms are committed to the same rules and standards for scientific practice. That commitment and the apparent consenses it produces are prerequisites for normal science, i.e. for the genesis and continuation of a particular research tradition. (p.11)

Consequently the steady acquisition of recognized facts and procedures is the prime educational aim, and 'until the very last stages in the education of a scientist, textbooks are systematically substituted for the creative scientific literature that made them possible' (p.165). The term 'paradigm' is used by Kuhn in two complementary senses:

On the one hand, it stands for the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on shared by the members of a given community. On the other, it denotes one sort of element in that constellation, the concrete puzzle-solutions which, employed as models or examples, can replace explicit rules as a basis for the solution of the remaining puzzles of normal science. (p.175)

Kuhn compares the use of these paradigms to the playing of a game of chess (p.145), in that the solutions to the scientist's problems must be sought within the rules of the game; and the rules are only to be changed as the result of what amounts to a periodical 'scientific revolution'. Such a revolution is 'the tradition-shattering complement to the tradition-bound activity of normal science' (p.6), and it brings with it inevitably a change in world-view for the scientist (p.111). Even after a 'revolution' no paradigm is ever complete, and 'normal science consists in its actualization...achieved by extending the knowledge of those facts that the paradigm displays as particularly revealing, by increasing the extent of the match between those facts and the paradigm's predictions, and by further articulation of the paradigm itself' (p.24).

Kuhn points out that the independence of scientists can be exaggerated, for scientists (like laymen) 'take much of their image of creative scientific activity from an authoritative source' - such as a scientific textbook, or a popularization or philosophical work modeled on text books (p.136).

Of course, it is a narrow and rigid education (he writes), probably more so than any other except perhaps in orthodox theology. But for normal-scientific work, for puzzle-solving within the tradition that the textbooks define, the scientist is almost perfectly equipped. (p.166)

When a scientific revolution is due, it is the 'very rigidity' which 'provides the community with a sensitive indicator that something has gone wrong' (ibid.).

In contrast to Kuhn, Popper places his emphasis quite differently: where Kuhn stresses the practical regularity of 'paradigms', Popper stresses the continual flux of scientific development, and the necessity for the questing scientist to seek to falsify our solutions and current facts and theories rather than to maintain them - 'we ought to try as hard as we can to overthrow our solution, rather than defend it' as he puts it in The Logic of Scientific Discovery (1959, p.16). Every conclusion or resting point is purely tentative - 'Every test of a theory, whether resulting in its corroboration or falsification, must stop at some basic statement or other which we decide to accept...But considered from a logical point of view, the situation is never such that it compels us to stop at this particular basic statement rather than that...For any basic statement can again in its turn be subjected to tests...' (p.29):

The basic statements at which we stop, which we decide to accept as satisfactory and as sufficiently tested, have admittedly the character of dogmas, (he writes) but only in so far as we may desist from justifying them by further arguments (or by further tests). But this kind of dogmatism is innocuous since, should the need arise, these statements can easily be tested further. I admit that this too makes the chain of deduction in principle infinite. But this kind of 'infinite regress' is also innocuous since in our theory there is no question of trying to prove any statements by means of it...(p.105)

The absolute certainty of demonstrable knowledge - 'the old scientific ideal' - 'has proved to be an idol' since 'the demand for scientific objectivity makes it inevitable that every scientific statement must remain tentative for ever' (p.280). Scientific knowledge, therefore, cannot be 'possessed', only sought after. For Popper it is 'bold conjectures or "anticipations"' that make for scientific advance, though these must be 'carefully and soberly controlled by systematic tests' (p.279), and

constantly challenged in an effort to falsify them rather than to dogmatically uphold them. Arnold's definition of culture as 'the best that has been thought and said in the world...' finds an echo in Popper's view of the application of the historical method in science (the unfashionableness of which he regrets):

It consists, simply in trying to find out what other people have thought and said about the problem in hand: why they had to face it: how they formulated it: how they tried to solve it. This seems to me important because it is part of the general method of rational discussion. If we ignore what other people are thinking, or have thought in the past, then rational discussion must come to an end. (pp.16-17)

Finally:

Science is not a system of certain, or well-established, statements; nor is it a system which steadily advances towards a state of finality. Our science is not knowledge (episteme): it can never claim to have attained truth, or even a substitute for it, such as probability.

Yet...although it can attain neither truth nor probability, the striving for knowledge and the search for truth are still the strongest motives of scientific discovery.

We do not know: we can only guess. And our guesses are guided by the unscientific, the metaphysical (though biologically explicable) faith in laws, in regularities which we can uncover - discover. (p.278)

Perhaps, when all is said and done, Popper's faith in laws' and 'regularities' is not so far removed from Kuhn's trust in 'paradigms', since Kuhn acknowledges that these survive only until the next scientific revolution. However, from the point of view of the school curriculum, it makes a considerable difference whether we adopt the open approach advocated by Popper and largely embodied in the Nuffield School Science Project where emphasis is upon 'the involvement of pupils through their own experimental investigations of problems which are real to them' and where pupils are encouraged to look 'critically at the evidence collected by others' (Schools Council, 1976, p.87) or whether we adopt the more traditional approach of initiation into the world of 'normal science'. Clearly there are strengths and dangers in both approaches, but bearing in mind the tendency of the scientifically minded to authoritarian conformity (see above, p.49) it would seem to be important that, either within their science courses or in complementary studies outside them, pupils should have the opportunity to develop also their capacity for open, flexible

thinking and imaginative creativity.

(ii) History

'L'histoire n'est pas une science, c'est un art et on n'y réussit que par l'imagination.' Anatole France, the literary historian, allows the hero of his novel Le Crime de Sylvestre Bonnard to express this sentiment; and this is a view which was probably shared by Arnold when he wrote in one of his Reports that 'perhaps there is nothing so animating, nothing so likely to awaken a man's interest' as the study of history (Marvin, 1908, p.xxxi). And Heinrich Heine (an author regarded by Arnold with respect) stresses the literary side of history in his comment on the response of the public to the novels of Sir Walter Scott: 'They demand their history from the hand of the poet and not from the hand of the historian. They demand not a faithful report of bare facts, but those facts dissolved back into the original poetry whence they came.' (quoted in Lucaks, 1962, p.56). Inevitably this view of history is not universally shared by historians, and this is reflected in the curriculum by those who would teach history in a relatively closed fashion - deductively, looking for and applying general laws in relation to the facts available, as opposed to those who adopt an inductive approach, more tentative and open and concentrating on developing an empathetic capacity for vicarious living in former times.

Pre-eminent among attempts to reduce history to a science with fixed laws is of course, Hegel, already referred to in connection with the Zeitgeist concept) with his cyclic principle of thesis, antithesis and synthesis to which historical events are supposed to conform. More recently and perhaps on a more modest scale, Carl Hempel (1970) asserts that 'in history no less than in any other branch of empirical inquiry, scientific explanation can be achieved...by means of suitable general hypotheses, or by theories, which are bodies of systematically related hypotheses' (p.239), contrasting his own view with that of the supporters of 'the method of empathic understanding', which he characterizes as simply a 'heuristic device' inferior to a scientific 'explanation':

In history as anywhere else in empirical science (he writes), the explanation of a phenomenon consists in subsuming it under general empirical laws; and the criterion of its soundness is not whether it appeals to our imagination, whether it is presented in terms of suggestive analogies or is otherwise made to appear plausible - all this may occur in pseudo-explanations as well - but exclusively whether it rests on empirically well confirmed assumptions concerning initial conditions and general laws. (p.240)

Just as historians make use of universal hypotheses from other empirical sciences to assess their data and reach their conclusions, Hempel believes 'universal' hypotheses can be generated within history itself as the historians' contribution to 'the methodical unity of empirical science'. Indeed, 'the elaboration of such laws with as much precision as possible seems clearly to be the direction in which progress in scientific explanation and understanding has to be sought' (p.242), in history as elsewhere. Within the curriculum, Roy Hallam's research (1975) reflects this deductive approach to teaching history. To quote from Martin Booth's (1978) paraphrase of Hallam's approach, Hallam is concerned 'with the extent to which a child can logically "home in" on a conclusion when confronted with a problem' and asks of a child studying history 'is he able to pose a hypothesis and then rigorously deduce the conclusion, using abstract thought; or is his reasoning limited to the immediate data in front of him? In fact, is he capable of proving an argument at all, either at the concrete or abstract level or is his thinking illogical, moving haphazardly from point to point?' (see Booth, 1978, p.3).

Martin Booth, in common with Hexter (1971) and Collingwood (1946) is opposed to this deductive approach to history, preferring a more open, inductive and imaginative orientation, partly because he believes that 'in the scientific sense, it is literally impossible to solve problems in history' (p.3) - the data, ultimately, is too complex, amorphous and intractable; the historian's job, therefore, is 'to put forward the most convincing account of the past' speculating critically and imaginatively on such data as is available to him. Booth argues that whereas 'in the past, history teachers concentrated on memory work and the accumulation

of discrete pieces of information' and 'more recently, following the research of Hallam, attention has been given to the development of logical deductive thinking and teachers and examiners have made extensive use of written primary evidence to extend and test this cognitive activity', in his view 'open ended, inductive thought is more characteristic of historical enquiry', a mode of thinking which 'can be attained at an abstract level by a high proportion of 15 year olds' given suitable teaching (p.8). Inductive conceptualization can be developed by drawing upon the pupils' own experience, a factor which increases their interest and their sense of the relevance of the subject. In conclusion, Booth affirms:

Inductive thinking involves the creation of personal constructs; it is essentially a synthesizing activity, whereas deductive thinking is destructive, in the sense that it analyzes and breaks down the evidence. It is the emphasis on personal research, personal inductive thinking that has made the course followed by the pupils in this research project so popular with the majority. (p.8)

Booth's orientation is in line with that of R G Collingwood (1946) who characterizes the inductive approach as follows:

The historian's picture of his subject, whether that subject be a sequence of events or a past state of things...appears as a web of imaginative construction stretched between certain fixed points provided by the statements of his authorities; and if these points are frequent enough and the threads spun from each to the next are constructed with due care, always by the a priori imagination and never by merely arbitrary fancy, the whole picture is constantly verified by appeal to these data, and runs little risk of losing touch with the reality which it represents. (p.242)

Naturally, he points out, we must avoid 'swallowing what our authorities tell us uncritically' otherwise the 'fixed points' between which the web is stretched may be invalid. Evidence and critical imagination are therefore the stuff of history; while dogma is to be shunned:

The old dogma of a single historical progress leading to the present, and the modern dogma of historical cycles, that is, of a multiple progress leading to 'great ages' and then to decadence, are...mere projections of the historian's ignorance upon the screen of the past. (p.328)

The pursuit of scientific certainty in history will more often than not prove a Will-o'-the-wisp; for 'science is and can be mistress only in her own house' (p.332) and history is essentially an art, not a science.

J H Hexter (1971) takes a similar view. Faced with the spurious scientific certainties apparently achievable in historical research by modern computers, Hexter comments:

The computer is a magnificent aid to research with dazzling potentialities for historical investigation. They are so dazzling that they may adversely affect the vision even of a wary historian who seeks to exploit them... What historians see with 'computer eyes'...are still human beings and human doings and sufferings. To avoid or correct distortion historians occasionally need to look at the past in a very old-fashioned way with human eyes. They fail to do so at peril of error for themselves and disaster for their discipline. (p.127)

The openness advocated by Hexter is evident in the methodology he advocates in an essay concerning 'A New Framework for Social History' (Hexter, 1961, chapter 2) at the conclusion of which he comments that:

It does not offer an explanation; it seeks one. It involves a minimum of direction about what to find and a maximum of openness to whatever answers investigation brings to light. To those who regard history as a disordered scrap heap which exists only to be scavenged for usable parts by the constructors of unavowed but predetermined eschatologies this openness will scarcely seem desirable. Working historians, however, who in their slovenly way would rather arrive at conclusions than start with them may see some small virtue in a work plan that places the conclusion at the end rather than at the beginning of an investigation. (p.25)

This consideration of open as opposed to closed approaches to the teaching of history has so far been conducted purely on an either/or basis of opposing factions. I therefore wish to make brief reference to a further view which subsumes and to some extent transcends these approaches in a way curiously relevant to the present thesis. Kieran Egan (1978) sets out a developmental scheme of history teaching in an article entitled 'Teaching the Varieties of History'. Briefly Egan distinguishes 'four more or less distinct stages in the typical person's development of historical understanding' to which he gives the names 'mythic, romantic, philosophic, and ironic' (p.20); and the characteristics of each of these stages are described in some detail in the course of the article. Finally, however, he suggests that 'these stages should not be seen as discrete steps, progression up which entails leaving behind all that formed the focus of interest in the previous stage'; they should rather be seen as cumulative, 'involving a progressive mastery of elements all of which are

necessary to a mature historical understanding'. He then summarizes this overall development as follows:

A mature historical understanding...will involve a 'mythic' ability to vivify past events and characters by imaginative projection; an ability to inhabit imaginatively the strangeness or 'otherness' of past times and forms of life and make 'romantic' associations with ideas, events, and characters; a 'philosophic' ability to see particulars as parts of more general schemes; and all these controlled by the 'ironic' purpose to understand the past on its own terms and for its own sake. (p.23)

In this scheme, it seems to me, we have a progression from a 'literary' (mythic and romantic) approach, through a 'dogmatic' (i.e. philosophically systematized) stage to a further 'literary' stage, more mature than before, where an ironic stance can cope disinterestedly with contrarieties and unresolved tensions and transcend the relatively closed systematizations of the penultimate stage. Needless to say, not everyone would work through this model precisely from the beginning to the end of their historical education, and many would never achieve the last two stages; but the model nevertheless seems to me to be a realistic and useful one with helpful implications for curriculum construction.

(iii) Religious Education

In chapter 2 of this thesis, where an attempt was made to sketch out some of the main developments in religious education since the Education Act of 1944, it was suggested that there was a general movement traceable from fairly confident, and relatively dogmatic, teaching in the years immediately following the Act towards a progressively more open approach in which personal experience, imagination and an understanding of religious language have come more and more to the fore. A quarter of a century after the 1944 Act and a full century after Arnold's Literature and Dogma, Martell (1972) could fairly sum up the situation: 'Our "gurus" no longer see religion as a set of dogmas to which the believer must subscribe; instead it is an open search for truth' (p.54). It must be: it could be acceptable on no other terms. The 'lay current' already remarked by Arnold is now a tidal wave.

W D Wall (1959) observed that 'in spite of...the legal embodiment of religious teaching in our educational system, ours is now largely a non-religious society. Its sanctions for the moral code are social and ethical, legal and pragmatic, rather than doctrinal, dogmatic or even generally religious' (p.19). Alves (1968) describing the impact of the scientific revolution on religious thought, noted that 'the emphasis of the scientific temper upon the continuous discovery of new truth tends to play down the value of truth which appears to base its claim upon its antiquity and permanence' (p.156) while 'the linguistic examination of the 'propositional' character of religious language, tends to the adoption of an existentialist position'; as a consequence of such changes in outlook, 'We cannot ask whether God is our Father, but only what such a statement means to those who make it' (ibid.). More recently a Department of Education and Science publication (1977) reminds us that 'our society is a multicultural, multiracial one, and the curriculum should reflect a sympathetic understanding for the different cultures and races that now make up our society' (para 10). Today's religious education, therefore, must operate in a secular, scientific, and multi-cultural context. Arnold's Literature and Dogma (see chapter 4 above) has much to say that is highly relevant to such a society. Unfortunately, it is for the most part couched in language which presupposes an acquaintance with the Bible, being written for a generation which was yet in the process of abandoning it; it is not really suitable, as it stands, for a generation which as now, has little or no knowledge of it. However, it is worth drawing attention to certain items in Arnold's book which have a bearing upon the 'open' approach to religious education required today.

The object of Literature and Dogma, it will be recalled, was 'to reassure those who feel attachment to Christianity, to the Bible, but who recognize the growing discredit befalling miracles and the supernatural' (Super VI, pp.142-143); in place of the unverifiable assumptions embodied in theological dogma, the 'natural truth of Christianity' was to be

emphasized. The work was 'an endeavour to free the Bible - by showing that it is not science but literature' (p.280), and that its language, 'fluid, passing and literary, not rigid, fixed and scientific' demands for its understanding 'some experience of how men have thought and expressed themselves, and some flexibility of spirit' (p.152). All this is consonant with an 'open' approach to religious education. Among the findings of R J Goldman's (1963) research into the development of religious thinking in young children was the fact that

There is a gap, widening in adolescence, between the pupil's theological view of the world and his logico-scientific view. This gap, appearing at the end of the junior school, may be closed if the pupil is encouraged in a critical but reverent approach to the Bible.

The approach advocated by Arnold is designed to bridge the gap later identified by Goldman. Arnold, of course, was addressing his observations to adults; Goldman's finding was ostensibly related to the religious development of children. However, the 'regressive' and 'concretistic' thinking which Goldman regarded as characteristic of retardation in religious development is still not always so regarded by all Christians, so that the research strikes home at much 'adult' mis-conceptualization; and is virtually identical with the kind of mis-conception objected to by Arnold.

Both Arnold and Goldman were concerned to encourage 'a critical but reverent' approach to the Bible. The 'natural truth' of Christianity was by no means diminished for Arnold by his acknowledgement that 'miracles do not happen' and that prophecy, properly understood, is not a kind of elevated fortune-telling. In fact Christianity becomes more 'natural', more accessible, if our conception of it does not demand incredible reversals of the natural order of Creation. And prophecy as insight has more genuine sustaining power for the human spirit than 'prophecy' as foresight, depending as the latter is on plausible interpretations of the most tenuous relationships by the exercise of partisan hindsight.

Arnold's emphasis on 'conduct' rather than doctrine is in line with

movements within the various Christian communities to take a fuller part in social and political affairs, evaluating social needs and political action against Christian principles. His view of religion as 'morality touched by emotion' (Super VI, p.178) stresses the importance of an anchor-age or point of reference for estimating the quality of our conduct coupled with a touchstone capable of motivating us to action. Such an approach provides openings for Christian teaching without prejudice to insights from other faiths which may be introduced to advantage in a multicultural society.

Equally viable in a multifaith society is Arnold's insistence upon tentativeness in the kinds of assertions we make about God, and his recognition of man's tendency to anthropomorphism - 'appropriate and seemly' in poetry and eloquence, but liable to 'lead him astray' in science. Recognition of an 'enduring power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness' (Super VI, p.200) is common to many religions, and acceptable to many humanists, at least as a point of departure in open discussion of the nature of faith and morality. Other tentative 'definitions' of God as 'the best that man knows or can know' or 'the stream of tendency by which all things seek to fulfil the law of their being' can serve as starting points for serious contemplation of man's relation to his cosmic environment; and the avowal that God is not a 'magnified non-natural man' does not abolish the value of religious symbolism although it can help to reduce the incidence of crudely anthropomorphic thinking.

In designating superstition as 'Aberglaube' Arnold sought to make his determined dismissal of it as gentle as possible. 'Extra-belief', although almost identical etymologically, somehow seems more generous toward the believer. Nevertheless, the dismissal is important; superstition in an age dominated by a scientific, or 'pseudo-scientific' framework of thought is no help to religion of whatever denomination. 'The human mind is assuredly passing away...from this hold of reliance', Arnold observed, 'and those who make it their stay will more and more find it will fail

them, will more and more feel themselves disturbed, shaken, distressed and bewildered' (Super VI, p.245). This is particularly true when diverse religions are brought into contact with one another. Arnold noted how within Christianity Protestants and Catholics tried vainly to maintain the miracles within their own denomination whilst dismissing those of their rivals. Inevitably, whether within or between religions, such intellectual friction has a tendency steadily to whittle away credence in all miraculous events. The human mind 'sees, as its experience widens, how they arise'. If a dogmatic system clings rigidly to them, experience will eventually undermine the whole edifice.

Arnold's treatment of the Trinity inevitably angered the orthodox church of his day, (see chapters 4 and 5 above), but there are more and more Christians who would appreciate his intentions and adopt the Christian-Humanist standpoint in relation to Jesus that 'Christendom with perfect justice...made him the Messiah' (my italics), thus putting the emphasis on man's recognition and acknowledgement of the divine qualities in Christ rather than upon the traditional 'sending' and 'sacrificing' interpretation entailing a curiously manipulative God.

Finally, Arnold's emphasis on inwardness, and 'the feelings and dispositions whence conduct proceeds' is conducive to an open approach in religious education, since the importance of conscience and self-knowledge is commonly recognized within other religions as well as Christianity, and by Humanists as well. For Arnold, inwardness and self-renouncement were the keystones of Jesus's teaching, and Jesus's approach is shown to be essentially literary as opposed to the dogmatic teaching of the pharisees. In preference to dogma and rule-making Jesus preferred to tell a story: 'A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho...' A concrete individual in a concrete context, and an 'ironic context (as in this example) as often as not.

Many Christians in the past have objected to editions of the scriptures under such titles as 'The Bible Designed to be Read as Literature'. Their

number must be diminishing; the question now is whether the Bible is to be read at all. Arnold was convinced that the Bible needed to be read with the same literary tact and sensitivity that we adopt towards other literature. In turning from theological to literary writing again in his Last Essays (Super VIII) he wrote:

I am persuaded that the transformation of religion, which is essential for its perpetuance, can be accomplished only by carrying the qualities of flexibility, perceptiveness, and judgment, which are the best fruits of letters, to whole classes of the community which now know next to nothing of them, and by procuring the application of those qualities to matters where they are never applied now. (p.148)

He believed that he was thus returning to a field 'where work of the most important kind has now to be done, though indirectly, for religion' (ibid.). From the point of view of the curriculum, it seems desirable, and in line with Arnold's way of thinking, that there should be free flow between literary and religious studies. Obviously each has its special emphasis and core. Ninian Smart (1968), for example, lists the dimensions of Christian study as ritual, experiential and social understanding (constituting its historical elements) and doctrinal, mythical and ethical elements (as its parahistorical fields). Literature, for its part, is just one of the aspects of the teaching of English. However, without disrupting the autonomy of English and Religious Education, respectively, advantages can be taken of opportunities for fruitful cross-fertilization. George Eliot, Bernard Shaw, H G Wells and Bertrand Russell are among the many free-thinkers who had the advantage of sharing in the Western biblical heritage before (and after) they renounced dogmatic religion. Schools, at a modest level, can make some provision for pupils to share something of this opportunity; and perhaps scriptural material (not only necessarily of Judaeo-Christian origin now but also from other Eastern religions) can be better enjoyed and more fully appreciated when it is offered freely as story or literature than when it is brandished as a talisman. On the other side, literature has made many contributions relevant to the teaching of Religious Education - for example in the

works of Shakespeare, Gerard Manley Hopkins, T.S. Eliot and Wilfred Owen, etc. Spiritual nourishment and a sense of the numinous can no longer (if they ever were) be gained from catechistical and mechanical indoctrination.

(iv) Moral Education

The year after Matthew Arnold died, in 1889 that is, a ballad published by Rudyard Kipling bore the well-known lines:

Oh, East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment Seat.

Not much more than half a century's movement of the Zeitgeist later another publication announced that

At exactly fifteen minutes past eight in the morning, on August 6th 1945, Japanese time...a tremendous flash of light cut across the sky. Mr Tanimoto has a distinct recollection that it travelled from east to west, from the city toward the hills...

If in John Hersey's account of Hiroshima (1946) the 'light travelled from east to west', the dark significance of the event was a communication from West to East. At all events, the two hemispheres could never again be regarded as separate. The significance of some words from one of Matthew Arnold's Reports of Elementary Schools was grimly enhanced by this and subsequent events:

To have the power of using, which is the thing wished, these data of natural science, a man, must, in general, have first been in some measure moralised: and for moralising him it will be found not easy, I think, to dispense with those old agents, letters, poetry, religion. So let not our teachers be led to imagine, whatever they may hear or see of the call for natural science, that their literary cultivation is unimportant. The fruitful use of natural science itself depends, in a very great degree, on having effected in the whole man...a rise in what the political economists call the standard of life. (Marvin, 1910, p.148)

Whether^{or not} Arnold is correct in his conclusion as to the 'agents' which will moralise mankind, we can no longer doubt his premise. The need for moral education is widely recognized, although there is a good deal of uncertainty about the means.

E. F. Schumacher (1974) sees the growth of materialism as a major contributory factor to moral malaise:

As a society, we have no firm basis of belief in any meta-economic values, and when there is no such belief the economic calculus takes over...

Nature, it has been said, abhors a vacuum, and when the available 'spiritual space' is not filled by some higher motivation, then it will necessarily be filled by something lower - by the small, mean, calculating attitude to life which is rationalised in the economic calculus. (p.96)

The lack of spiritual motivation is also acknowledged by W D Wall (1959) in his comments on the reduction of doctrinal sanctions and the growth of anti-religious and anti-clerical states':

The effect of this is to remove a major element of certainty and to leave the individual to find for himself a philosophy and a rule of life. It naturally increases anxiety and displaces, if it does not actually increase the possibilities of conflict. It also takes away an explanatory principle and the basis upon which resignation and acceptance can be justified as well as sweetened. (pp.19-20)

However, Wall continues, 'Paradoxically too it tends to elevate the individual conscience to the position of final arbiter' (ibid.) - something which he would not entirely deplore. The development of inwardness, personal autonomy and responsibility become increasingly important in a society where external sanctions are reduced.

John Wilson has perhaps done more than any other individual to promote an understanding of 'moral development' and to analyse the conceptual complexities inherent in this difficult field. He recognizes more than many contributors to this problem the dangers of partisanship in moral education:

It is one thing to try to produce (by whatever methods) good Christians, good Communists, good middle-class Englishmen, good liberals, good supporters of a technological society, etc. and quite another to try to produce people who are reasonable (educated, sane, sensible, etc.) in this area: people who will raise seriously the important question 'What ought I to do and to feel?', answer them seriously, and act on the answers. (Wilson, 1974, p.7)

His, like Arnold's is a 'disinterested endeavour to learn and propagate...' the means towards a better life; but in his case the approach is 'scientific', or at least, analytical. His first principle is to establish a taxonomy of moral education, analysing the relationship between the nature of justice, equality, human feelings, and empathy, the acquisition of knowledge in relation to these, and the application of such knowledge as is acquired. For example, in relation to 'justice' the first need is for

a cognitive grasp of the concept 'person', then for an understanding of cognitive reciprocity in relation to other persons, and finally of affective reciprocity towards them, and so on. This is not the place to attempt a full development of Wilson's analysis, still less a critique, which would require a thesis to do it justice. But in the shadow of my admiration for Wilson's work, I would like to voice one minor criticism, and that is in connection with his use of pseudo-scientific symbolism to refer to the 'components' of his taxonomy. To refer to these components as: PHIL (HC), PHIL (CC), PHIL (RSF), EMP..., GIG..., KRAT, etc.

seems to me to be an unnecessary complication to an otherwise invaluable achievement. 'Our business (he writes) is to encourage our students in forms of understanding and criteria of action which are public and demonstrable, not those which are the peculiar property of partisan groups.' (p.12). It is all the more surprising therefore to find him producing statements like the following:

Particular "sources of moral strength", whether religious or not, are for empirical researchers to discuss: in my list, they would fit into the area I have called KRAT. (p.12)

A page of sentences loaded with EMPs, GIGs, KRATs, and PHILs certainly gives the impression of being the 'peculiar property of a partisan group' - or at least of a highly esoteric mystery, and to that extent verges to my mind on dogmatism. Wilson is capable of the most lucid exposition; it seems a pity therefore to resort to a style that smacks of pedantry. In 'A Comment on Christmas' (Super X), Arnold had some harsh words to say on Comte for a similar lapse:

It is a mistake to suppose that rules for conduct and recommendations of virtue, presented in a correct scientific statement, or in a new rhetorical statement from which old errors are excluded, can have anything like the effect on mankind of old rules and recommendations to which we have been long accustomed, and with which our feelings and affections have become intertwined. 'Pedants always suppose that they can...(p231)

If this observation from Arnold seems harshly misapplied to Wilson's jargon, perhaps Occam's razor is an acceptable criticism: 'Entities are not to be multiplied without necessity'.

In an article on 'Common Schools Abroad' (Super XI), Arnold makes

a curious statement in relation to literature and morality: Moral teaching for young people, except when it is indirectly conveyed in stories...is in general dull: and when it is conveyed in stories, the story may interest, but the moral is apt to be lost sight of' (p.95). The first part of this observation, in the light of his other writing, and from the point of view of this thesis, is unexceptionable; but the second part seems to have 'lost sight of' the nature of story. If the moral of a story is too blatantly explicit, it is likely to be resisted anyway; it is the suggestiveness of the values embodied implicitly in literature which it seems is likely to produce the most lasting effect on the reader. This is an inward operation, such as Arnold usually recognizes and approves. Stories 'show us how things are' (see chapter 2 above): and to the extent that they moralize explicitly, they are less effective as literature.

Specialization, integration and values

As was pointed out in chapter 3 of this thesis H M Inspectorate's recent working paper on the secondary curriculum maintains that 'the contribution of the curriculum to the moral, ethical and spiritual areas of experience remains of prime importance' (DES, 1977, p.11). The same paper urges schools to encourage 'flexibility of mind' (akin to Arnold's 'Spontaneity of consciousness') and lists the areas of experience with which the curriculum needs to be concerned as (1) aesthetic and creative, (2) ethical, (3) linguistic, (4) mathematical, (5) physical, (6) social and political, and (7) spiritual. A degree of development upon each of these lines is to prepare the individual teenager for life beyond school. Matthew Arnold in Literature and Science offered a rather simpler categorization, although his general aims were much in line with these.

'The powers which go to the building up of humanlife (he wrote) are the power of conduct, the power of intellect and knowledge, the power of beauty, and the power of social life and manners' (Super X, pp.60-61):

We can equate 'ethical and creative' with Arnold's 'power of beauty'; the 'social and political' area with his 'power of social life (though perhaps not of manners)'; the 'ethical' area with his 'power of conduct'

and the 'linguistic', 'mathematical' and 'physical' areas can reasonably be subsumed together under 'the power of intellect and knowledge' - all which (oddly enough) leave the 'spiritual' area unaccounted for in Arnold's taxonomy. Our main concern here, however, is not to debate the refinement or crudity of Arnold's classification in comparison with its modern counterpart, but to consider his moral orientation with regard to the whole. His first concern is to recognize that these 'several powers...are not isolated, but there is...a perpetual tendency to relate them one to another in divers ways'. Furthermore, 'we have need of them all' and 'when we have rightly met and adjusted the claims of them all, we shall then be in a fair way for getting soberness and righteousness, with wisdom' (p.62). By means of a broad education, therefore, Arnold seeks to promote an end similar to that of our contemporary Inspectorate with its 'prime importance' of 'the moral, ethical and spiritual areas of experience'.

'Let us...avoid,' he writes in the same essay, '...any invidious comparisons between the merits of humane letters, as means of education, and the merits of the natural sciences' (p.69). As has already been remarked, 'the circle of knowledge must be complete' in Arnold's view. Literature, however, is to be the catalyst to transmute the benefits of general education into moral behavior:

How, finally (he asks) are poetry and eloquence to exercise the power of relating the modern results of natural science to man's instinct for conduct, his instinct for beauty?...Here again I answer that I do not know how they will exercise it, but that they can and will exercise it I am sure.

His conclusion is based on faith in the 'fortifying, and elevating, and quickening, and suggestive power' of creative literature, regardless of its time and place of composition, and regardless of the authors' knowledge of modern science - since their operations are on another plane, their use of language is different, and their intentions are not the same. 'If...there is to be separation and option between humane letters on the one hand, and the natural sciences on the other', however, a partisan note creeps into Arnold's judgment: 'the great majority of mankind...

would do well, I cannot but think (he writes), to choose to be educated in humane letters rather than in the natural sciences. Letters will call out their being at more points, will make them live more' (p.70).

The interrelationship of subjects was important for Arnold, despite his bias towards literature, and he had little room for narrowness in any field, or for specialization. Of narrow theologians he wrote (in Culture and Anarchy): 'No man, who knows nothing else, knows even his Bible' (Super V, p.184). And when in Literature and Science he wrote that 'A man who passes his life in instrument-knowledges is a specialist' (Super X, p.63), he meant by 'instrument knowledges' disciplines such as Greek grammar, etc, which (in his view) 'cannot be made to directly serve the instinct...for beauty...(or) the sense for conduct' but merely 'lead to other knowledges which can' (p.63). His view on the following observation of Professor Andrade can be imagined:

We no longer have men of learning writing for other men of learning, or men of science writing for other men of science, or disciples of exact science writing for other disciples of exact science, or physicists writing for other physicists, or students of optics writing for other students of optics, or spectroscopists writing for other spectroscopists, but rather infra-red spectroscopists writing for other infra-red spectroscopists. (quoted in Foskett, 1964, pp.22-23)

And the esoteric and irrelevant hair-splitting criticised in Louis Kampf's (1969) article 'The Scandal of Literary Scholarship' would have been equally objectionable to him - probably more so, because at least the work of the 'infra-red spectroscopists' was of potential benefit to mankind. Like Snow (1963) he would doubtless have mourned the fact that 'in our society...we have lost even the pretence of a common culture. Persons educated with the greatest intensity we know can no longer communicate with each other on the plane of their major intellectual', let alone moral, concerns. And H J A Hargreaves (1970) points out that the tendency towards early specialization is not only immoral but 'inappropriate' for:

the person who finds that his specialized knowledge is obsolescent, and has no particular facility to learn, has the ground cut from beneath his feet. Although this is a scientific age...science must be tempered and balanced by an understanding of the humanities...As in other crucial periods of history, there is a need for whole men and not split personalities. (p.18)

Our English system of early specialization is based on the principle of 'subject-mindedness', but as Wall (1968) acknowledged, 'ADC Peterson (1960) and others have pointed out that the Crowther concept of 'subject mindedness' is supported by no published evidence, that it is an aspect of human nature that manifests itself only in England and Wales' (p.85) And more recently Wall (1977) has written:

Specialization which is premature or which insists more on the acquisition of facts than on the perception and generalization of relationships within the specialization itself, between branches of knowledge, or on their application to life, is likely to give a false confidence and to decrease the possibilities of contact with others differently formed. It is also likely to inhibit the growth of those very forms of thought on which it purports to be based and to prevent by its rigidity any capacity to transfer learning to other fields in creative ways. (p.99)

It is hoped that the concept of a 'core curriculum' - provided that it is not too rigidly and dogmatically applied - may help to foster a renewed recognition of the importance of all-round education, and reduce the excessive early specialization which is an unfortunate feature of our school curricula at present. Specialized teaching is another aspect of this issue, and it may be wondered whether secondary school pupils need to be divided and re-divided into different groups for different subjects quite so much as many are at present, especially in the early secondary stages. Arnold appears to have favoured keeping groups together for teaching as much as possible, and writes of 'the increased regularity and steadiness of attention that a child gains by going through his whole day's work with the same associates, and under the same teacher'. 'I am convinced', he continues,

that the benefit to the children themselves and to the discipline of the school, which would result from retaining them in the same divisions, would more than compensate any additional trouble which the necessity of varying the instruction in particular subjects, such as arithmetic, to children equal in most subjects, and therefore classed together, might impose upon the teacher. (Marvin, 1908, p.14)

The hint of 'streaming' towards the end of this quotation is, I believe, illusory; the grouping of scholars in Arnold's view, requires only 'a sufficient degree of correspondence in their attainments to render their working together perfectly practicable^{ca}'; for an organization 'where

classification is as various and as little uniform as are the attainments of individuals'. (Marvin, 1908, p.55) is repugnant to Arnold. The grouping, moreover, should be independent of sex differences: 'I must say (he writes) that I have never yet seen any inconvenience arise from bringing together boys and girls in the same school' - adding rather coyly '...if their playgrounds are kept distinct'! (Marvin, 1908, p.15). Arnold's views on grouping and specialization were expressed, it must be admitted in circumstances very different from our own. But they reflect a concern for maintaining genuinely human relationships and for promoting the development of whole persons.

Literature, Dogma and Democracy

'The growing power in Europe', Arnold wrote, 'is democracy' (Super II, pp.10-11); but whereas in France the democratic advance towards equality has given 'to the body of the common people, a self-respect, an enlargement of spirit, a consciousness of counting for something...which has raised them in the scale of humanity' (ibid., p.9), in England, democracy has been slow in developing itself' (p.12). Nevertheless such a development was inevitable, Arnold believed, and to be welcomed. Although by the nature of things 'perfection will never be reached':

to recognize a period of transformation when it comes, and to adapt themselves honestly and rationally to its laws, is perhaps the nearest approach to perfection of which men and nations are capable. No habits or attachments should prevent their trying to do this; nor indeed, in the long run can they. Human thought, which made all institutions, inevitably saps them. (ibid. p.29)

Thus the dogmas, instituted by human thought, will in like manner be sapped by human thought. 'Openness and flexibility of mind are at such time the first of virtues' (ibid.), Arnold believed. With the growth of democracy combined with the increasing reliance on the scientific principle of verification, Arnold later wrote in Literature and Dogma, people now 'are asking for the reason and authority for the things they have been taught to believe' (Super VI, p.148); and this again was to be welcomed. As the reign of unquestioned authority fades out, the growth of democracy demands that education shall improve the general culture. And Culture -

with its 'ideal of human perfection' was 'an inward spiritual activity, having for its characters increased sweetness, increased light, increased life, increased sympathy' (Super V, p.108) - an activity depending in large measure on wide reading - on literature - in Arnold's view. This thesis has been an attempt to justify Arnold's position. As was stated at the outset, it would be impossible to prove it - statistically, or by any other means; but it was felt worthwhile to map out some of the issues.

Clearly not all the evidence points one way. When in Literature and Dogma Arnold speaks of authority and absolutism giving way to democracy and relativism (which was largely true of the direction at the time), he could scarcely have foreseen the emergence of new forms of authority and absolutism - of totalitarianism of the kind feared by Orwell and foreshadowed in his novel Nineteen-Eighty-Four. The very growth of democracy has provoked its opposite principles. Karl Popper (1966), in The Open Society and its Enemies, has attempted to show that

civilization has not yet fully recovered from the shock of its birth - the transition from tribal or 'closed society', with its submission to magical forces, to the 'open society' which sets free the critical powers of man... (and that)...the shock of this transition is one of the factors that have made possible the rise of those reactionary movements which have tried, and still try, to overthrow civilization and to return to tribalism. (p1)

And similar in certain important respects is the thesis of Eric Fromm's work, The Fear of Freedom, (1942), that

freedom has a twofold meaning for modern man: that he has been freed from traditional authorities and has become an 'individual', but that at the same time he has become isolated, powerless, and an instrument of purposes outside himself, alienated from himself and others...Freedom has reached a critical point where, driven by the logic of its own dynamism, it threatens to change into its opposite. (p.233)

In Fromm's view 'the future of democracy' depends upon 'the full realization of the individual's potentialities, together with his ability to live actively and spontaneously' - a realization which must be fearlessly and positively embraced if we are to avoid a new thralldom to authoritarianism.

Clearly, literature is no panacea for the ills of mankind and dangers to democracy. Its value can be defended and attacked in curious ways. Trotsky, for example, (as interpreted by Eagleton (1976)) wrote that 'in a capitalist society (art) is converted into a commodity and warped by

ideology; yet it can still partially reach beyond those limits. It can still yield us a kind of truth - not, to be sure, a scientific or theoretical truth, but the truth of how men experience their conditions of life, and of how they protest against them' (p.74). This observation, turned about, applies neatly to Alexander Solzhenitsyn in context; and one wonders whether a hidden Arnold is somewhere writing a companion volume to Literature and Dogma entitled 'Samizdat and Ideology'.

One of the reasons for the recrudescence of authoritarianism is doubtless the felt need for certainty and security in a world whose multitudinousness can bear down upon the individual with a menacing complexity. Life in a contracting, technologically-oriented world inevitably loses something of its simplicity. Perhaps this increasing pressure was in Jerome Bruner's mind when he wrote that 'cognitive mastery in a world that generates stimuli far faster than we can sort them out depends upon strategies for reducing the complexity and clutter' (quoted by Ing, 1978, p.33). It has been one of the objects of this thesis to suggest that literature is one of the means, one of the strategies, for reducing the clutter in the sphere of emotional experience, and for giving it shape and order. Imaginative literature also has the capacity, as I have tried to show, for replacing the certainties of dogma with a fearless recognition of uncertainty and diversity, a factor which is vital to the maintainance of democracy. In The Ascent of Man, Bronowski (1973) expresses this idea:

The Principle of Uncertainty or, in my phrase, the Principle of Tolerance, fixed once and for all the realisation that all knowledge is limited. It is an irony of history that at the very time when this was being worked out there should rise, under Hitler in Germany and other tyrants elsewhere, a counter-conception: a principle of monstrous certainty. When the future looks back on the 1930s it will think of them as a crucial confrontation of culture...against the throwbacks to the despots' belief that they have absolute certainty. (The Ascent of Man, p.367)

That a confident tolerance of uncertainty and diversity, which is the hallmark of literary culture, can begin to be developed in school is evidenced in the work of Walter Loban (1963) whose research showed that 'those subjects who proved to have the greatest power over language... were the subjects who most frequently used language to express tentativeness...

supposition, hypothesis and conditional statements.' Rosen (1973) commenting on this rightly observes that 'it is a high level of achievement when children can verbalize doubt and not find the state of doubt intolerable.' (p.67). At a mature level, this was Matthew Arnold's achievement.

Arnold, the opponent of dogma, is sometimes dogmatic; a proponent of 'sweetness and light' he is occasionally harsh and frequently controversial; advising us 'to see life steadily, and to see it whole,' he himself is sometimes biased and inconsistent; the apostle of humility he is frequently pompous. But for those who care for the freedom of the individual, and the value of imaginative creativity, he is always interesting, and usually pertinent; and, as I have tried to show, his views on an 'open' literary, yet balanced education are as relevant today as when he expressed them.

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